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How effectively can a Best Value Review be  
undertaken within a local authority  
Emergency Management service?

Volume 1 of 2

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PhD

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## ABSTRACT

The legal duty of Best Value requires local authorities to fundamentally review all services in order to achieve continuous improvement. They must challenge how services are delivered, compare performance with those of others, consult the local community to assess whether needs are being met and explore the potential use of competition in future delivery. 'Challenge', 'compare', 'consult' and 'compete' are referred to as the 'Four Cs' and underpin the legislative Best Value framework.

This research aims to explore how effectively Best Value can be applied to the provision of Emergency Management services by U.K. local authorities. Five key factors were identified as influencing the way Emergency Management services are provided: level of funding; legislative base; service monitoring; culture and public awareness. A census of service stakeholders within all mainland U.K. local authorities was conducted. Analysis of data collected revealed a range of associations between the five key factors and stakeholder perceptions relating to Best Value implementation. This data was also used to identify and critically evaluate the application of several existing quality management models in assisting local authorities achieving the 'Four Cs' within Emergency Management. This evaluation revealed usage of these models, either in isolation or combination, exclusively within the service would not achieve the effective measurement of the 'Four Cs', nor address the perceived drivers and barriers to Best Value implementation.

Using primary data and literature review findings, a specific support model applying Best Value principles to Emergency Management was developed. This support model

is regarded by practitioners as having the potential to assist local authorities in achieving implementation of rigorous and comprehensive Best Value Reviews within Emergency Management.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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- Emergency Management stakeholders who participated in this research study
- Stuart, my family and friends

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

<u>Term:</u>	<u>Definition:</u>
Best Value	The ultimate aim of Best Value is to improve local authority services so they are less costly, better in quality and more responsive to the views of local citizens.
Best Value Performance Plan	An annual publication to be produced by all local authorities detailing the targets for service improvement that have resulted from all Best Value Reviews undertaken along with an explanation of how the authority plans to achieve these targets (originally termed 'Local Performance Plan').
Best Value Pilots	In order to test Best Value ahead of legislation, English and Welsh local authorities were invited to submit pilot project proposals to test the Best Value framework, assess the extent of actual improvement in service quality and efficiency that resulted from the new process and disseminate the lessons learnt to all other non-pilot local authorities.



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Best Value Service Reviews	These are a fundamental re-assessment of a local authority's services. They are not simply a justification as to why a service is provided in a particular way.
Challenge	Determine why a particular service is needed, and if so does it need to be provided in any particular form.
Civil Defence	Measures (other than actual combat) to defend against any hostile attack by foreign power. These are measures that could be performed before, during or after any such attack.
Compare	Make comparisons between the service delivered by a local authority and those of others across a range of relevant indicators, taking into account the views of both service users and potential suppliers.
Compete	Demonstrating that the preferred means of delivering a service has been, or will be, arrived at through a competitive process.
Compulsory Competitive Tendering (C.C.T.)	C.C.T. came into force through several pieces of legislation that identified certain services that were previously provided exclusively by in-house local authority workers but under the legislation had to be put out to tender. The local authority workforce had to compete against private bidders and if the local authority won the contract their 'contract price' became its budget and the service was provided as if it were an 'arms-length' organisation servicing the local authority, often referred to as a Direct Labour Organisation (D.L.O.). Similarly, if the work was contracted to an outside private company, the relevant part of the local authority workforce was disbanded.

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Consequence Specific Emergency Plan	A plan detailing how an organisation will respond to an incident that, regardless of the cause or location, has a specific effect.
Consult	Have two-way communication with local taxpayers, service users and the wider business community in the delivery of local authority services.
Continuous improvement	This is often referred to as being the 'Fifth C' of Best Value.
Corporate Review	This is a high-level, review of what a local authority wants to achieve corporately and how it performs, measured against key indicators and the aspirations of its local community. A corporate review requires a realistic analysis of the authority's existing corporate culture and effectiveness of current organisational structure to assess strengths and weaknesses. The strategic direction of the authority would be determined as well as decisions being taken about resource allocation. This process allows adjustment to the authority's long-term vision as well as identifying priority issues to be subjected to Best Value Review.
Emergency	Any event (happening with or without warning) causing/threatening death/injury, damage to property or the environment or disruption to the community, which because of the scale of its effect cannot be dealt with by the emergency services and local authorities as part of their day to day activities.
Emergency Management	All of those activities (planning, training, liaison and operations) which seek to prepare for, and mitigate, the effects of any extraordinary incident upon the population or upon the environment (also termed by some as 'Emergency Planning'/'Civil Protection').

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Emergency Management stakeholders	For purpose of this research this terms comprises of English, Scottish and Welsh local authority Chief Executives, Best Value Managers, Emergency Management professionals and Elected Members with responsibility for overseeing the Committee to which Emergency Management reports.
Emergency Planning College	The Cabinet Office administered national documentation centre for all specialist books, journals, magazines and other publications on Emergency Management, located at Easingwold in North Yorkshire.
English Single Tier Authority	For the purpose of this research English Metropolitan Borough Councils, London Borough Councils and English Unitary authorities represent 'English Single Tier local authorities'.
English Two Tier Authority	For the purpose of this research Shire County Councils, Shire District Councils, Fire and Civil Defence Authorities and Combined Fire Authorities represent 'English Two Tier local authorities'.
'Four Cs'	Refers to 'challenge', 'compare', 'consult' and 'compete', i.e. activities which must be comprehensively undertaken in order to comply with Best Value legislation.
Generic Emergency Plan	A plan detailing how an organisation will respond to an emergency regardless of its cause or location (also termed a 'catch-all plan').

Integrated Emergency Management (I.E.M.)	A philosophy introduced in central government's guidance document 'Dealing With Disaster'. Modern Emergency Management should be carried out at a generic level for all emergencies and not for specific single emergencies such as Civil Defence. The other key features are plans must be flexible and tested, arrangements should be integrated into emergency responding organisation's working structure, all departments activities should be integrated and co-ordinated with other external organisations.
Lead Government Department Concept	The identification and appointment of an appropriate central government department to assume the lead role in responding to an emergency which has a national impact.
Local Government Re-organisation	From 1 April 1996, 13 English District Councils and several Shire County Councils were replaced by 13 Unitary authorities, in Wales all 8 County Councils and 37 District Councils were replaced by 22 Unitary councils, and in Scotland 9 Regional Councils and 53 District Councils were replaced by 32 Unitary authorities.
Liaison	This area of Emergency Management comprises of consulting local community representatives, chairing formal planning groups and consulting external stakeholder organisations.
Operations	This area of Emergency Management comprises of two phases. The first concerns those activities that need to be performed during the immediate response to an emergency, e.g. activating Emergency Plans, supporting the emergency services and setting up a Crisis Management Team. The second phase focuses upon the long-term recovery following the occurrence of an emergency, e.g. providing economic recovery strategies and restoring the environment.
Planning	This area of Emergency Management comprises of project managing, researching, consulting, drafting Emergency Plan procedures, identifying and allocating resources, setting up 24 hour notification systems, publishing plans, monitoring, amending and maintaining plans.

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Site Specific Emergency Plan	A plan detailing how an organisation will respond to an emergency at a specific site and will probably include extensive information about the local environment, topography, alternative access routes, site hazards or seasonal events that occur in the locality.
Training	This area of Emergency Management comprises of creating a training strategy, project managing, consulting, producing training material, identifying participants, running tests and exercises, delivering seminars and producing literature.

## **CHAPTER ONE – THE FEASIBILITY OF BEST VALUE IN LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

### Introduction:

In 1997 the U.K. central government began a programme of local authority reform. One component of this reform package was the introduction of Best Value. Best Value was defined in the content of the 'Local Government Act 1999' whereby "*(a local) authority must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness*". Best Value replaced Compulsory Competitive Tendering (C.C.T.), which had been introduced in the 1980s. C.C.T. required local authorities to tender in-house service provision for specified service areas against private-sector contractors in order to identify the best alternative for achieving value for money. Whilst C.C.T. was only applicable to specific local authority services (as stipulated through various legislation including the 'Local Government Planning And Land Act 1980' and the 'Local Government Act 1988'), Best Value must be applied to all services provided by a local authority. The framework of Best Value is contained in the 'Four Cs' of 'challenge', 'compare', 'compete' and 'consult' as defined in the 'Local Government Act 1999'. By scrutinising an individual service in-line with the 'Four Cs' then 'continuous improvement', referred to as some as the 'Fifth C' (e.g. Sparke, 1999), is potentially achievable.

One service not subjected to C.C.T. requirements but now to be scrutinised under Best Value is Emergency Management. Local authority Emergency Management

provision in the U.K. is historically defined within a Civil Defence context.

Following the Second World War, close attention was paid to preparing the U.K. for the perceived threat of attack from the Soviet Union and its allies (Steed, 1998).

Towards the end of the Cold War, Civil Defence planning diminished but was offset by an unprecedented spate of emergencies that occurred as a result of non-hostile attack. These included the Bradford Football stadium fire in 1985, the Kings Cross Underground station fire in 1987, the Piper Alpha oil rig explosion in 1988, the Lockerbie air crash in 1988 and the Hillsborough stadium overcrowding in 1989 (McLean and Johnes, 2000). In recent years the focus of local authority Emergency Management services has changed from Civil Defence to peacetime planning as a consequence of the national events and international developments described above. Whilst some guidance was issued by central government (Home Office, 1998) regarding the provision of Emergency Management by a local authority, no statutory duty was placed upon local authorities to deliver such a service.

The initial objectives of this research centred on measuring how effectively Best Value could be applied to local authority Emergency Management provision.

However, when evaluating the findings of the literature review, it became apparent this would not be possible as there was no data upon which a comprehensive assessment could be made. In addition, no consistent formal mechanisms had been agreed by local authorities or supported by central government to assess Best Value across the U.K. Emergency Management provision in an objective way. At the start of this research, no Emergency Management Best Value Review had actually been conducted. As a consequence, the focus of the research underpinning this study was appropriately modified to consider the feasibility of Best Value in local authority

Emergency Management. An outcome of this shift in emphasis was to identify the most appropriate processes that English, Scottish and Welsh local authorities could adopt in order to implement a comprehensive and objective Best Value Review of their Emergency Management provision.

#### Justification For The Research:

Whilst limited research had already been conducted in relation to local authority Emergency Management, it was of a general nature. It focussed upon the role of a local authority in responding to an emergency in relation to the role of others (Steed, 1998) or to the specific impacts of emergencies such as the psychological issues facing the survivors of emergencies (Eyre, 1989, 2002) and the use of Geographical Information Systems (G.I.S.) within the service (Laverick, 1999). By contrast, a significant volume of research has been completed by a wide range of organisations and individuals regarding the potential impact of Best Value within local government service delivery. None of this research focussed specifically upon, or even considered, the application of Best Value within local authority Emergency Management provision. Instead, much of this research concentrated upon the larger and more visible services delivered by a local authority or alternatively focussed upon the implementation issues surrounding specific aspects of Best Value. For example, Dungey (1999), the Audit Commission (1999), Douglas and Cawley (June 1998) and Martin (December 1998) all considered the public consultation issues of Best Value whilst Bovaird (December 1998) explored the use of competition, benchmarking and performance networks in achieving Best Value. The Accounts Commission (October 2000) had considered the implications of Best Value specifically upon Community



Care Services and the Audit Commission (July 1998) had investigated the lessons learned from joint Best Value Reviews within Social Services Departments. The Institute Of Wastes Management (January 2000) had explored the issues to be addressed when applying Best Value to the Waste Management industry.

The chapters that follow will clearly show the uniqueness of this research by identifying the key drivers in local authority Emergency Management provision as well as the barriers to be overcome in order to ensure effective Best Value implementation. Several objectives distinguish this work from that of previous authors:

- To define the local authority Emergency Management service;
- To evaluate the application of Best Value to local authority Emergency Management;
- To identify and evaluate the perceptions of Emergency Management stakeholders;
- To evaluate existing quality management tools, and if necessary, develop, and assess as appropriate, a bespoke quality management tool to facilitate a complete and objective Best Value Review specific to Emergency Management;
- To evaluate the processes undertaken by several local authorities as part of their Emergency Management Best Value Reviews and determine the extent to which an alternative quality management tool specific to the Emergency Management service could facilitate a more effective Review in the future.

### Research Philosophy:

The research began by determining the most appropriate research philosophy to adopt in order to explore fully the researchable question stated earlier. In the early stages of this research, a positivist philosophy was adopted. The review of literature had resulted in the identification of a host of issues that appeared to either drive or act as barriers to the delivery of a local authority's Emergency Management service. From these key hypotheses were defined, which were subsequently tested. A positivist approach was considered most appropriate for this research as there clearly existed an identifiable target audience of local authority Emergency Management stakeholders in the form of Chief Executives, Best Value Managers, Emergency Management professionals and Elected Members with responsibility for overseeing the committee to which the Emergency Management service reported. From these stakeholders, it was possible to gain an understanding of their previously unexplored perceptions of the key drivers and barriers to implementing an objective Best Value Review specifically within local authority Emergency Management provision. The positivist philosophy underpinned this measurement of stakeholder perception. These perceptions would identify those aspects of implementation seen as being easy to achieve as well as those considered as difficult or perhaps uneconomic to either partially or fully achieve. This philosophical approach also allowed stakeholders to describe the support mechanisms they intended to use in order to implement Best Value as well as raise concerns regarding the obstacles to achieving full compliance. By doing so, a set of established beliefs (identified by the literature review) could be upheld or rejected with respect to their relevance to Emergency Management.

This process not only ensured that subsequent analysis could determine whether the issues identified during the literature review did actually influence the delivery of an Emergency Management service, it also ensured that differences in perceptions according to job title, local authority structure and geographical location were also determined. The approach provided quantitative data, as well as some qualitative data, from which it was possible to evaluate the hypotheses. This data was also used to identify the most common quality management tools employed within local authorities.

As this research developed and Best Value became a statutory duty, a phenomenological research philosophy was incorporated to complement the positivist approach. This allowed for in-depth investigation into the complex organisational processes that constitute the Emergency Management provision in order that explanations could be sought and used to triangulate the key findings from the earlier positivist approach.

The first phase of this complementary strategy ensured data gathered at the start of the research was triangulated with several Emergency Management professionals who had gained direct experience of implementing Best Value into their service, and by doing so, their recent and relevant experiences could be incorporated into this study. The opportunity to triangulate the census data was essential because Best Value had evolved rapidly from a central government White Paper proposal to a legal duty with defined inspection and audit requirements during the early stages of this study. Indeed, the findings of both Warwick University (1999) and Cardiff University (February 2000) revealed many lessons learned by English and Welsh local

authorities selected to be Best Value pilot authorities. At the time when the in-depth interviews took place with the Emergency Management professionals, all local authorities had completed at least their first full year of Best Value Reviews, giving these stakeholders direct working experience of the issues surrounding implementation, albeit perhaps not necessarily within their own Emergency Management service. This process of triangulation was essential in maintaining the integrity of this study for two reasons. First, to gauge the accuracy of the census findings. Secondly, to obtain feedback from Emergency Management professionals in relation to how any potential framework to support a Best Value Review could work in a 'real life' setting. It also provided the opportunity for them to comment specifically upon whether any existing or proposed alternative framework had the potential to address the drivers and barriers identified following the analysis of the stakeholder's census data. These interviews also facilitated the collection of additional in-depth qualitative data from Emergency Management professionals with direct understanding of implementing Best Value into their service. This qualitative data provided a detailed insight into the knowledge and understanding of the Best Value process from those stakeholders with first-hand experience of Review implementation. Analysis of qualitative data determined whether initial perceptions identified from the literature review, and measured by the quantitative analysis in the first part of this study, had changed as a result of actual Best Value implementation and, more importantly, why these changes in perception had occurred. The findings obtained from this part of the research were then compared with those interpretations made following the earlier analysis of stakeholder perception in order to ensure the support model developed to assist Emergency Management Best Value Review teams remained as comprehensive as possible.

The second phase of the triangulation involved eliciting the views of members of a national professional issues group who represented Emergency Management service delivery within all types of local authorities. This was done to confirm or dispute whether the drivers and barriers identified earlier in the research, and upon which the Best Value Review support model had been based, remained relevant and significant. This was essential because whilst local authorities had completed two full years of Best Value Reviews, the process of Best Value had continued to evolve. It was important to ensure the proposed support model was built upon correctly assumed service drivers and barriers. The views of these members were used to evaluate the proposed support model's presentation, content, completeness and potential usefulness in facilitating a future Emergency Management Best Value Review.

#### Research Strategy And Methodology:

The research consists of four stages in order to fulfil its aim and objectives:

- a literature review;
- a stakeholder census;
- two areas of supporting qualitative work.

A review of academic and professional literature was undertaken to identify the full requirements of local authority compliance with Best Value as well as the current issues within Emergency Management provision that could potentially impact upon such compliance. From this information, a census was conducted with those English,

Scottish and Welsh local authority personnel identified earlier as being ‘Emergency Management stakeholders’. This census was developed to identify the perceptions of these stakeholders in relation to not only Best Value being applied to the Emergency Management service but also views regarding the future of the service.

Several national bodies endorsed this census. The Emergency Planning Division of the Home Office (at the time the recognised central government department with day to day responsibility for Emergency Management in England and Wales) endorsed this census and provided funding to cover printing, postal costs, data analysis and the production of an interim findings report outlining initial perceptions of Best Value in Emergency Management. The Emergency Planning Society (E.P.S.), the U.K.’s professional body for all those with an involvement in any form of crisis, emergency or disaster planning and management role, also supported the census and agreed for their logo to be incorporated into it in order to provide additional credibility. The Convention Of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA), who provide the representative voice of Scotland’s unitary local authorities and at the time of census production whose membership included all Scottish authorities, also supported the work undertaken by this research. Indeed, CoSLA endorsement ensured the census was appropriate for Scottish respondents acknowledging that for Emergency Management in Scotland there was no Civil Defence Grant and that Best Value was being implemented in a different way when compared with England and Wales. The issue of census endorsement is discussed in detail in Chapter Five, but the support shown by the Home Office, the E.P.S. and CoSLA provided additional justification of why this research was appropriate within the Emergency Management service.

Analysis of the census data was then used to evaluate the level of understanding, experience and potential effectiveness of using several existing quality management frameworks as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review. Following this a bespoke support model specifically applying Best Value to Emergency Management was proposed, developed and subsequently evaluated.

Throughout this research, the author's experience as a practitioner-researcher has been drawn upon without, as best possible, biasing the outcomes obtained. For example, the knowledge gained as a service practitioner assisted considerably in the identification of the target audience for the census conducted at the start of this research as well as the selection of appropriate organisations for endorsing the study. However, it was equally important to avoid service practitioner bias influencing the direction of the study and this was achieved by ensuring the contents of the stakeholder questionnaire were developed in response to findings from the literature review and that follow-up interviews and fieldwork were driven by the findings obtained from the subsequent data analysis.

#### Implications For Future Local Authority Emergency Management Policy:

The original research question devised for this study was to measure the effectiveness of Best Value application in local authority Emergency Management provision. It was discovered however, at an early stage in this research it was not immediately possible to start measuring the effectiveness of Best Value application within the service without first putting in place appropriate mechanisms to overcome the current lack of Emergency Management performance data. This provided the opportunity to

either identify or develop a consistent mechanism for evaluating and implementing Best Value within the Emergency Management provision and in doing so account for a series of ambiguities unique within the composition of this particular local authority service. This research has, for the first time, endeavoured to identify the drivers and barriers that influence the delivery of a local authority's Emergency Management service. These drivers and barriers have then subsequently been used to develop a bespoke support model that local authorities could use during an Emergency Management Best Value Review. This model attempts to measure drivers and overcome any barriers to objective Best Value implementation. The support model accounts for the full remit of the Emergency Management provision as well as the terms of reference for a Best Value Review as prescribed by central government. The drivers and barriers fall into two categories; those that are internal to a local authority and those that are external to a local authority. Internal drivers and barriers are within the control of a local authority to influence whilst external drivers and barriers are outside the remit of a local authority's influence. The Review support model developed during this research offers a tool that has the potential to assist local authorities in formally measuring the achievement of Best Value within their Emergency Management provision. Whilst some drivers and barriers have the potential to be measured in full, others can only be currently measured in part until central government fill current shortfalls within the policy surrounding the provision of this service. However, the evaluation findings suggest that by using this support model, a Best Value Review team can successfully diagnose areas of concern in relation to current external drivers and barriers that influence the provision of an Emergency Management service. In order for the model to maximise its potential and create the opportunity to positively influence future local authority Emergency



Management policy, ‘live’ piloting should be conducted and subsequent findings analysed. Chapters Eight and Nine consider the implications of these issues upon future Emergency Management policy in greater detail.

### Thesis Sequence:

The following eight chapters in this thesis will describe comprehensively the work undertaken to fulfil the earlier stated research objectives.

Chapter Two entitled “The Best Value Review Process And Its Implementation In Local Authorities” details the recent reforms made to local government in the U.K.. It introduces the Best Value concept in terms of its piloting, its key components including central government auditing and inspection, the impact of devolved power to Wales and Scotland upon its implementation as well as an evaluation of implementation in its early years.

The third chapter entitled “The Local Authority Emergency Management Service” considers the historical context of this particular service against its legislative framework and the main issues currently facing the Emergency Management service. These issues cover whether there is a need for such a service to exist, its statutory basis, structure, philosophy, its funding and the technological resources available to the Emergency Management service.

A review of both academic and professional literature is presented in Chapter Four. This review focussed upon the two areas of Best Value and local authority Emergency

Management. Whilst there is a large range of literature relating to Best Value, there is by comparison, a very small but nevertheless growing body of specific literature relating to Emergency Management. This research is unique because it considers the two subjects of Best Value and local authority Emergency Management together. The findings from this review were then used throughout the remainder of the thesis in order to influence the range of issues considered and measured using the various sources of primary data.

Chapter Five (“Research Methodology And Method”) explains and justifies the research philosophy and strategy used throughout the duration of this study. This chapter explains the multi-method approach adopted in order to ensure all important issues in the evolving areas of Best Value and Emergency Management were explored and interpreted correctly.

The “Key Findings From The Survey Of Emergency Management Stakeholders” are presented in the sixth chapter. This chapter begins by focussing upon the findings obtained from the census of Emergency Management stakeholders before discussing the perceptions of a number of Best Value practitioners obtained during a series of follow-up one-to-one interviews.

The development of the model to support the implementation of a comprehensive Best Value Review within an Emergency Management provision is explained in Chapter Seven. A range of established quality tools are assessed and arguments for the development of a bespoke model specific to Emergency Management as an alternative are discussed in relation to the strengths and limitations of the existing

quality management tools. The subsequent development of the support model is discussed including the incorporation of those key findings identified in the previous chapter.

Chapter Eight, entitled “Evaluation Of The Support Model For Local Authority Emergency Management Services Implementing Best Value”, details the model’s evaluation outcomes in terms of its relevance, completeness and practicability as perceived by a range of Emergency Management stakeholders. In addition, the modifications made to the support model as a consequence of evaluation findings are also discussed.

The final chapter consists of two parts; the first summarising the outcomes of this research study and the second proposing a number of recommendations for future research. The outcomes of this research provide the information needed to fill many of the existing knowledge gaps identified during the literature review. These outcomes, including the development of the bespoke model to support the implementation of a Best Value Review, have the potential to considerably enhance practitioner understanding of, as well as the actual application of, Best Value in their service. The outcomes also have the potential to enhance the work of other researchers by raising their understanding of the issues to address when endeavouring to implement Best Value within this particular local authority service. Indeed, the latter part of this chapter recommends several areas of future additional work in order to build further upon this study.

It is hoped that this thesis can provide the local authority Emergency Management profession with a greatly improved understanding of the perceptions held by stakeholders regarding the current status and future delivery of the service. In addition it is hoped the support model can assist local authorities in effectively implementing Best Value to their Emergency Management service, thereby positively influencing future service provision. The support model provides a prescription of a local authority's Emergency Management service, and if implemented properly over a period of time, it will help Emergency Management Departments to provide their Best Value Review teams with measurement data upon which to make an assessment of the service's effectiveness.

Whilst this thesis has not been submitted for any other academic award, a paper entitled "Assessing Best Value In The Emergency Management Service" (Ayre et al., 2002) was presented at "The 7<sup>th</sup> World Congress For Total Quality Management Business Excellence" conference in Verona.

The work to now be presented represents a critically investigated and evaluated approved topic that has resulted in an independent and original contribution to knowledge of Best Value in local authority Emergency Management provision.

## **CHAPTER TWO – THE BEST VALUE REVIEW PROCESS AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

### Introduction:

This chapter reviews recent reforms in U.K. local government and introduces Best Value. Consideration is given to the piloting of Best Value in local authorities as well as a detailed description of the key components of the process. This detailed description will consider the steps taken by local authorities in implementation and the process undertaken by central government in its auditing and inspection of any local authority Best Value Review. Towards the end of the chapter, is an evaluation of Best Value in its early years of local authority implementation.

### Local Authority Reform:

One of the key areas of each (of the main) political party manifestos during the 1997 U.K. General Election campaign related to the delivery of local authority services. Each party presented policies relating to how services should be provided. The Labour Party, who were subsequently elected, made a manifesto commitment to introduce a duty on local authorities to obtain “Best Value” in order to improve the quality of local services, as well as the efficiency and economy with which they were delivered. During the election, research by MORI indicated the public’s understanding of local authorities remained weak and there was a perception that the system of U.K. government “*does not work well*”. Indeed MORI (Barunholtz and Page, 1997) claimed the challenge for local government was to address “*service*

*delivery problems while simultaneously embarking on new measures to rejuvenate itself*'. This lack of understanding is perhaps caused in part by an almost continuous state of change to local authority structures and reporting since 1974. Change has taken many different forms including duties, funding, working boundaries and central government policies (Sparke, 1999). Whilst some changes have been imposed by central government, others have been implemented by local authorities themselves in attempts to strengthen and improve their service delivery. Sparke (1999) claimed many of these initiatives were built on the premise that by controlling inputs improvements could be delivered. However, he believes in reality the main beneficiary of this premise was the local authority and not the service user, i.e. the emphasis was upon cost and not the quality of a service.

One of the most controversial central government imposed duties on local authorities was Compulsory Competitive Tendering (C.C.T.) under the 'Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980' and subsequently the 'Local Government Act 1988'. Under this duty, local authorities were required to tender in-house service provision for specified service areas, against private-sector contractors and were precluded from continuing to use their own employees to deliver services unless the statutory tendering process proved theirs to be the best method of achieving value for money. The Department Of Environment, Transport And The Regions (D.E.T.R., 1998) claimed value for money within C.C.T. was typically measured in terms of cost, with less emphasis upon service quality. Failure to meet every requirement of the tendering process led to ministerial intervention and often re-tendering with the possibility of the in-house bid being excluded when the Secretary of State felt this was an appropriate punishment. The outcomes of C.C.T. were mixed, a minority of local

authorities achieved significant savings but elsewhere savings were largely or wholly offset by the costs of the actual tendering process (Sparke, 1999). Table 2.1. outlines the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the C.C.T. process.

<u>Strengths And Weaknesses Of C.C.T. Process</u>	
<u>Strengths:</u>	<u>Weaknesses:</u>
Local authorities were required to consider the standard and cost of the services for which they were responsible.	Far from persuading local authority of the benefits of market testing, CCT often had the effect of increasing resentment and opposition to central government guidance.
Widened the choices available as to how services were provided.	Service quality was often neglected and efficiency gains were uneven and uncertain.
Persuaded reluctant local authorities to address difficult management issues that needed to be tackled.	The process proved inflexible in practice.
Required local authorities to define for the first time the level and type of service that citizens could expect and make specifications publicly available for inspection.	Compulsion bred antagonism, so that neither local authorities nor private sector suppliers have been able to realise the benefits that flow from a healthy partnership.
	The detailed process was often a deterrent to many contractors tendering for services.
(Source: Sparke, 1999)	

Table 2.1.: Strengths And Weaknesses Of C.C.T. Process

Ultimately C.C.T. was widely rejected by local authorities as an imposition from outside because the methodology was tightly defined by government legislation and was not flexible enough to allow for local choice. Indeed, D.E.T.R. (1998) considered throughout the C.C.T. process there was only limited opportunity for local authorities to consider the quality of the service being delivered.

On its election in 1997, the government embarked upon a programme of local authority reform. In the preface of D.E.T.R.'s (1998) publication the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott stated:

*When we were elected we pledged to modernise the country and to bring government back to the people. Local government has a key role to play in our country if people are to have the quality of life they deserve. So modernising local government is at the heart of this pledge. ...We can achieve this only by working with councils, businesses, professional bodies, the voluntary sector and local people. Equally, within local communities all must work closely together in partnership.*

The reforms presented by Government were multi-faceted, Best Value being just one aspect of a much broader package. The whole reform programme touched upon all aspects of local authorities as outlined in Table 2.2. The D.E.T.R. (1998) claimed these reforms would create opportunities for local choice, increase local governments accountability and “reinvigorate” local democracy.



The Reform Programme:

- Reformed local democracy – for example, through new political structures and a clearer split between executive and non-executive roles;
- A new ethical framework – including standards committees at every council and codes of conduct for members and officers;
- Reform of local authority finance and powers – for example, through the creation of a single capital finance fund and a new duty on authorities to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas;
- Driving improvements in service delivery through Best Value.

(Source: Audit Commission, 1998)

Table 2.2.: The Reform Programme

Whilst the new Government were very critical of, and opposed in principle to C.C.T., they stated they would not abolish it until they had a replacement system (Armstrong, 1998) safeguarding the main advantages of C.C.T. listed in Table 2.1. The replacement system was introduced as Best Value. The remainder of this chapter will focus upon how Best Value has been devised, developed and implemented in local government.

Best Value:

Best Value drew its principles from Value Management. Value Management was defined as *“a style of management, particularly dedicated to mobilise people, develop skills and promote synergies and innovation, with the aim of improving the overall*

*performance of an organisation*” (British Standard, 1997), with particular attention being paid to considering ‘value’ from the customers perspective. Best Value was seen to require the synergy of an organisation’s culture, policies and the practices in order to enhance performance. The main benefits of Value Management were seen as being continuous improvement, cost savings and better products/services. Three key factors in Value Management have been identified in the make-up of Best Value; namely performance, expectations and price. These are often referred to as efficiency, effectiveness and economy. The ‘Local Government Act 1999’ frequently used the terms economy, efficiency and effectiveness but did not provide a clear definition for any of these terms. For example, *“A Best Value authority must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”* and *“In conducting a review an authority shall aim to improve the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”*. Indeed, the purpose of the ‘Local Government Act 1999’ was defined as *“to make provision imposing on local and certain other authorities requirements relating to economy, efficiency and effectiveness; and to make provision for the regulation of council tax and precepts”*. The D.E.T.R. (1998) stated quality public services must be a key feature in a “healthy” democratic society and where local authorities failed to deliver such services these shortcomings would be addressed, i.e. *“they (central government) require councils to meet the aspirations of local people for the highest quality and most efficient services that are possible at a price that people are willing to pay”*.

In the absence of any specific definitions in the ‘Local Government Act 1999’, the Audit Commission produced a diagram showing how economy, efficiency and effectiveness link inputs to outputs, as shown in Figure 2.1.

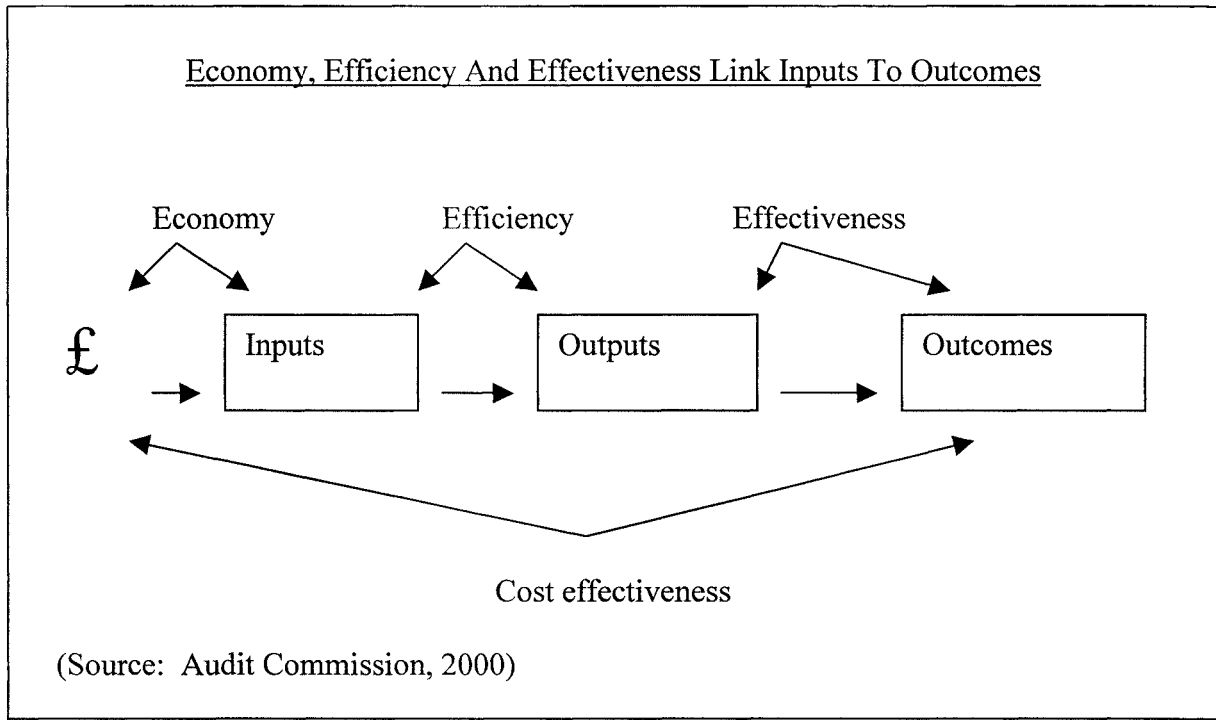


Figure 2.1.: Economy, Efficiency And Effectiveness Link Inputs To Outcomes

From Figure 2.1., it was possible to interpret ‘economy’ referred to monetary input, ‘efficiency’ to how that monetary input was turned into outputs, and ‘effectiveness’ to how outputs produced outcomes. These simplistic interpretations did not reflect economist definitions of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. For example, *“expenditure is effective if it achieves its objectives without taking account of costs; it is economic if it achieves the desired objective at the least cost; it is efficient if it gives the highest Net Present Value when other uses of the funds are considered”* (Craven and McNulty, 1994). More specifically economists use the term ‘productive efficiency’ rather than ‘economy’, that is, achieving a given output at least input cost. Economists use the term allocative efficiency rather than ‘efficiency’. This refers to

producing an output with allocative efficiency at a marginal cost equal to the marginal social value of that output to society. It means, in other words, producing efficiently that which is demanded by society. This is usually done by equating marginal cost with price. When applying the economist definitions to Best Value, it is possible to argue Best Value is actually about economy and not efficiency. Thus, this research is not looking at the economics of Best Value or local authority provision, but the systems which are put in place to undertake its measurement.

The Government identified twelve principles underpinning their Best Value approach, as presented in Table 2.3. A general framework (see Figure 2.2.) was published by central government, within which local authorities were free to establish what their communities required and to respond, as they judged appropriate, within the resources available to them. It was the Government's stated intention that decisions should be made, wherever possible, by locally informed, elected and accountable people. The framework identified key elements which in the Government's view were required of local authorities so as to give effect to the duty of Best Value.

Twelve Principles Underpinning Best Value

1.	The duty of Best Value is one that local authorities will owe to local people, both as taxpayers and the customers of local authority services. Performance plans should support the process of local accountability to the electorate.
2.	Achieving Best Value is not just about economy and efficiency but also about effectiveness and the quality of local services – the setting of targets and performance against these should, therefore, underpin the new regime.
3.	The duty should apply to a wider range of services than those now covered by C.C.T.
4.	There is no presumption that services must be privatised and, once the regime is in place, there will be no general requirements for councils to put their services out to tender, but there is no reason why services should be delivered directly, if other, more efficient, means are available.
5.	Competition will, therefore, continue to be an important management tool and test of Best Value, but it will not be the only such tool and is not in itself enough to demonstrate that Best Value is being achieved.
6.	Central government will continue to set the basic framework for service provision, which will, in some areas, as now, include national standards.
7.	Detailed local targets should have regard to any national targets and to performance indicators and targets set by the Audit Commission, in order to support comparative competition between authorities and groups of authorities.
8.	Both national and local targets should be built on the performance information that is, in any case, needed by good managers.
9.	Audit processes should confirm the integrity and comparability of performance indicators.
10.	External auditors will need to report publicly on whether Best Value has been achieved and should contribute constructively to plans for remedial action, including agreement on measurable targets for improvement.
11.	There should be provision for intervention at the direction of the Secretary of State, on the advice of the Audit Commission, when an authority has failed to take agreed remedial action or has failed to achieve realistic targets for improvement.
12.	The form of intervention should be appropriate to the nature of failure. Where an authority has made limited use of competition and, as an exception to the usual rule, intervention may include a requirement that a service or services should be put to competition. Intervention might also take the form of a requirement that an authority should accept external management support, and may relate either to specific services or to the core management of the council.

(Source: Sparke, 1999)

Table 2.3: Twelve Principles Underpinning Best Value

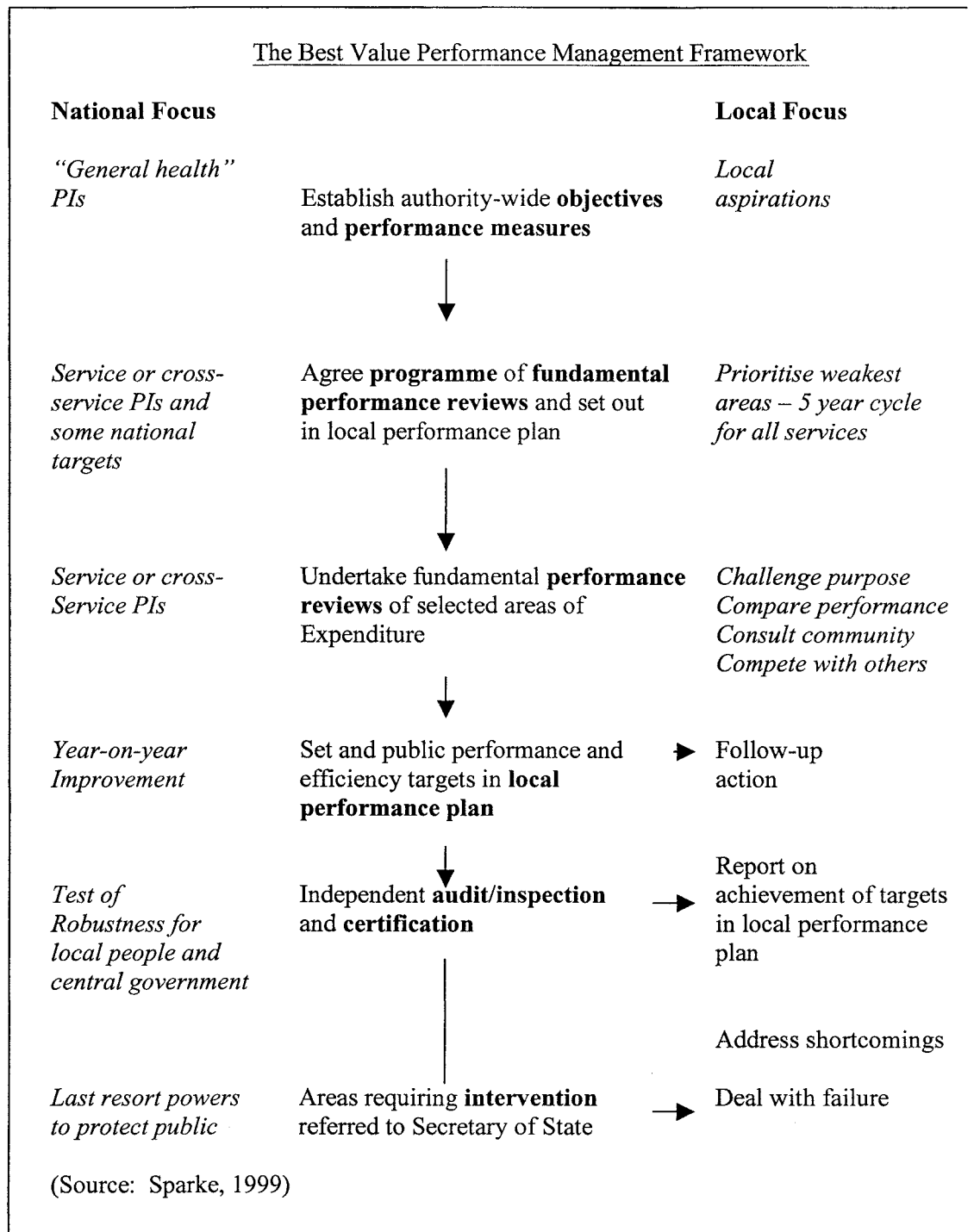


Figure 2.2.: The Best Value Performance Management Framework

The Government made a series of commitments which underpinned the framework shown in Figure 2.2. First, they committed themselves to adopt a forward thinking approach to developing policies rather simply reacting to immediate pressures.

Central government deemed in future services must not be delivered in a way that is most convenient to the provider but in a way that meets the requirements of service users. The government also made an explicit commitment not to accept “*mediocre*” public services and that greater use of new technology would be explored and utilised to meet the evolving needs of service users. Finally, central government pledged to “*value public service, not denigrate it*” (D.E.T.R., 1999).

The generic framework (presented in Figure 2.2.) complemented the twelve principles presented in Table 2.3. in several ways. The first principle stated Best Value was a duty local authorities owed to local people and should assist in making them more accountable to the electorate. The generic framework incorporated this principle by ensuring local aspirations were considered when establishing authority-wide objectives and performance measures. The requirement for accountability was also clearly indicated in the framework as local authorities were required to produce and make freely available a Local Performance Plan (now known as a Best Value Performance Plan). The second principle required local authorities to ensure Best Value considered not just the economy and efficiency but also the effectiveness and quality of their services. The framework reflected this by clearly showing local authorities must conduct service reviews that challenge the purpose of services, compare service performance with others, consult with the community about services and then assess service competitiveness all of which, if undertaken fully, should allow a local authority to meet the requirements of the second principle. Principle number

three required local authorities to subject all their services to Best Value and not just those previously considered by C.C.T.. The framework in Figure 2.2. highlighted to local authorities they must agree a programme of fundamental performance reviews covering all services within a five year period making perceived weak areas a priority. The fourth and fifth principles considered why competition was seen as a vital component of Best Value. The former principle informed local authorities there would no longer be (as under C.C.T.) an automatic requirement to put services out to tender, however, if services could be provided more efficiently elsewhere then these possibilities must be explored. The importance of competition as a management tool was clearly recognised although in isolation it is not considered enough to secure the achievement of Best Value. The Best Value Management framework clearly showed where competition should be considered (i.e. as part of a performance review) as well as how it fits with other Review activities (i.e. compare, consult and challenge). Principles six, seven and eight in Table 2.3. related to requirements under Best Value for national and local target setting in services. Incorporated throughout the generic framework were references as to how the ‘national’ and ‘local’ focuses of target setting for Best Value could be met. To ensure local authorities complied with the requirements of Best Value, principles nine and ten related to the need for internal and external auditing. The framework in Figure 2.2. clearly indicated at which point in the Best Value process audit and inspection occurred. The final two principles, numbers eleven and twelve, stated that if necessary central government would intervene in failing services if appropriate. Once again the Best Value Management framework identified at which point in the process intervention could be possible and how this interfaced with the audit and inspection process. The generic framework built upon the twelve principles and converted them into a diagrammatic format.



Whilst the generic framework was flexible and adaptable to every individual local authority's circumstances, it highlighted all of the issues that need to be considered in order to fulfil the twelve principles of Best Value. For the purpose of this research the focus is upon the fundamental performance review aspect of the Best Value Performance Management Framework shown in Figure 2.2., i.e. the 'Four Cs' of 'challenge', 'compare', 'consult' and 'compete'. These components were used as the basis upon which to determine whether or not systems used to undertake Emergency Management Best Value Reviews were as comprehensive and objective as possible.

#### Piloting Best Value In Local Authorities:

To test Best Value ahead of legislation, English local authorities were invited to submit pilot project proposals. A sample of thirty five local authorities (plus two police authorities) were selected to become formal Best Value pilots. There was great diversity within the pilot sample regarding the implementation of Best Value, as outlined in Appendix A. The aim of the pilot scheme was to test the Best Value framework, assess the extent of actual improvement in service quality and efficiency that resulted from the new process and disseminate the lessons learnt to all other non-pilot local authorities. Indeed, many local authorities whose pilot bids were not successful or did not opt to submit a bid decided to implement Best Value before it became a statutory duty. The D.E.T.R. appointed The Local Government Centre at Warwick University's Business School to evaluate the English Best Value pilot schemes (Sparke, 2000). Table 2.4. summarises the interim evaluation produced by Warwick University.

Warwick University Business School  
Interim Evaluation Findings

• All pilot authorities found Best Value a greater challenge than expected.
• Best Value was proving to be a major opportunity.
• Pilot authorities were beginning to see real change.
• Consideration needed to be given to the role of the Elected Member – they have a responsibility to ensure that Best Value is democratic and transparent with accountability built into each stage.
• Local government needs to find a way of working that supports and rewards both managers and front line staff who secure continuous improvement.
• Best Value places significant demand upon resources (time and staff).
• Need for effective co-ordination of activities.
• Importance of effectively scoping reviews combined project and resource planning.
• Not sufficient challenge.
• Comparison – some good some not.
• Developing more systematic and comprehensive approaches to public engagement.
• Many decided to give in-house teams opportunity to improve and use open competition only where prove unable to meet targets for improvement.
• Partnering is becoming synonymous with Best Value.

(Source: Sparke, 2000)

Table 2.4.: Warwick University Business School Interim Evaluation Findings

When considering Table 2.4. it was interesting that several of Warwick University Business School's findings related to process issues, i.e. the challenge aspect of Best Value was much more difficult to address than pilots expected, resource requirements were greater than expected, the standard of comparison activities undertaken by pilots varied considerably and extra time was needed for pilots to engage effectively with

the public. These process related findings were particularly pertinent for this research which aimed to identify the most suitable process for facilitating a comprehensive Emergency Management Best Value Review.

Cardiff Business School were similarly appointed by the Welsh Local Government Association (W.L.G.A.) and the Welsh Office to provide independent input into an evaluation study of Best Value within Wales to which virtually all Welsh local authorities had committed themselves. Cardiff Business School evaluated the early Best Value exercises, monitored the overall impact of Best Value in Wales and assessed the implementation of Best Value on local services. Table 2.5. summarises the final report produced by Cardiff University (2000).

<u>Cardiff University Business School Findings</u>	
	• Implementation of Best Value slower than expected.
	• Staff time was stressed.
	• Concern about lack of Elected Member involvement.
	• Elected Members and Officers believed Best Value was better than C.C.T. – significant step forward.

Table 2.5.: Cardiff University Business School Findings

As with the earlier Warwick findings, work undertaken by Cardiff University Business School, as shown in Table 2.5., also identified that Welsh pilots had experienced process problems. Welsh local authorities found implementing Best Value had required more staff time input than they initially anticipated.

Both Warwick and Cardiff University surveys highlighted a number of similar findings. Both surveys identified Best Value was considered by pilots as being more appropriate than C.C.T. and it offered an opportunity for local authorities to make real change. However, to maximise the benefits of Best Value, it was seen that Elected Members needed to have greater involvement in the process. Both University studies also identified implementing Best Value was more challenging than local authorities had previously considered. The findings from both studies were disseminated widely so that all local authorities could consider the experiences of the pilot authorities and incorporate the findings into their own in-house approaches being adopted for implementing Best Value once made a statutory duty. The author felt it was also important to consider the findings of Warwick and Cardiff Universities (as shown in Tables 2.4. and 2.5.) alongside the perceived strengths and weaknesses of C.C.T. as shown earlier in Table 2.1. Whilst the interim Best Value findings clearly showed implementing Best Value had been a steep learning curve for the various pilot authorities these findings also implied authorities had been able to implement (albeit with differing rates of success) which perhaps suggested the process was more flexible than the former C.C.T. regime. These interim findings also revealed English pilots in particular considered and accepted partnering to be a key component of the new regime, something not comfortably accepted by either local authorities or the private sector under C.C.T. The Best Value evaluation findings concluded all pilots still had considerable work to do in relation to the new process, most notably in the area of 'compete'. This suggested pilots remained uncomfortable with the idea of market testing perhaps as a result of their previous C.C.T. experiences.

In Scotland, the Secretary of State and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) established a joint Task Force on Best Value, which comprised of The Scottish Office (now the Scottish Executive), CoSLA and the Accounts Commission (the Scottish equivalent of the Audit Commission), to develop and implement Best Value across local government. The Task Force set out a three year implementation plan for the development of Best Value. In Year One, authorities were asked to demonstrate a commitment to Best Value leading to them in Year Two demonstrating progress with their plans and in Year Three demonstrating achievement of Best Value (Scottish Executive, 2002). The Task Force published its final report in December 1999 which discussed the longer-term framework required to achieve Best Value in Scotland and made recommendations to the Scottish Executive. In June 2000 the Scottish Executive stated they viewed Best Value as being a core element in improving public services allowing local authorities to manage and identify priorities so as to achieve continuously improving services (Scottish Executive, 2000). The Executive also reported the majority of Scottish local authorities did not wish to see a prescriptive approach to Best Value being introduced in Scotland. However, the Scottish Executive believed an appropriate legislative duty would be likely.

In England and Wales, Best Value became a statutory duty under the 'Local Government Act 1999' with effect from 1 April 2000. A Best Value authority is "*a local authority; a National Park authority; the Broads Authority; a police authority; a fire authority constituted by a combination scheme and a metropolitan county fire and civil defence authority; a waste disposal authority; a metropolitan county passenger transport authority; Transport for London; (and) the London Development Agency*".

In relation to England, 'local authority' means "*a county council, a district council, a*

*London borough council, a parish council or a parish meeting for a parish which does not have a separate parish council; the Council of the Isles of Scilly; the Common Council of the City of London in its capacity as a local authority; (and) the Greater London Authority so far as it exercises its functions through the Mayor”.*

With respect to Wales ‘local authority’ means “*a county council, a county borough council or a community council*”. The ‘Local Government Best Value (Exemption) (England) Order 2000’ exempted parish councils from Best Value providing their budget income in 1999/2000 or either of the 2 preceding years was less than £500,000 (Sparke, 2000). As well as making Best Value a mandatory requirement, this Act also abolished C.C.T.

The duty of Best Value applies to all services which an authority provides, whether directly by the use of its own staff or indirectly through the use of the private and voluntary sectors or through partnership agreements. In addition to this local authorities were required to set quality standards that, as a minimum, aimed to bring performance in-line with those of the top quartile of local authorities. Efficiency targets should also be set over a five year period that, as a minimum, are consistent with the top quartile of local authorities and also strive to achieve 2% efficiency improvements per annum across the entire local authority (Sparke, 1999).

Moreover, all managers and employees have a responsibility in continuous service improvement at all times, not just during Best Value performance reviews. The Government have made clear the duty of Best Value is one local authorities will owe to local people, both as taxpayers and users and this will be assessed via internal local authority, and external independent body, audit and inspection.

As well as the production of regular reports by the Universities of Warwick and Cardiff regarding the progress of the Best Value pilot authorities, many other organisations including the Audit Commission, the Local Government Association and CoSLA, produced good practice examples for local authorities to consider while developing their Best Value processes.

#### The Best Value Process:

The Best Value process consists of a distinct number of phases that are sequential, as displayed in Table 2.6. The Corporate Review, the starting point for every local authority, determines the authority's vision and direction. The outcome of the Corporate Review will impact upon all the other stages of the Best Value process. Whilst stages two to eight can be revised throughout the five year cycle, it is unlikely the authority's vision and direction will be altered within that timescale.

<u>The Best Value Process</u>	
Stage:	Action:
1.	Corporate Review
2.	Agree Programme of Fundamental Performance Reviews
3.	Devise Corporate Systems and Framework
4.	Best Value Service Reviews
5.	Set performance and Efficiency Targets
6.	Publish Best Value Performance Plan
7.	Audit – Internal and External
8.	Inspection

Table 2.6.: The Best Value Process

Each stage of the Best Value process as outlined in Table 2.6. will now be described and evaluated.

#### Stage 1: Corporate Review:

This is a high level, review of what a local authority wants to achieve corporately and how it performs, measured against key indicators and the aspirations of its local community. It was expected each local authority would use this as a start to their Best Value process. The local authority via consultation with its community will decide upon key social and economic objectives within this Corporate Review. A range of consultation methods should ideally be employed, in addition to annual surveys of



resident's perceptions, e.g. service satisfaction surveys, mystery shopper exercises, opinion polls and surveys, interactive websites and public meetings (Sparke, 1999). Local authorities could well find there was some conflict between performance data and user satisfaction data. For example, a service could be achieving high levels of performance but the end-users may have a low satisfaction level or in other words a service may be effective and economic but not efficient. In this scenario, a local authority would have needed to make an appropriate judgement in order to identify priority areas for review.

Undertaking a Corporate Review represented a local authority's equivalent to producing a business plan for the whole authority. A Corporate Review requires a realistic analysis of the authority's existing corporate culture and effectiveness of current organisational structure to assess strengths and weaknesses. The strategic direction of the authority would be determined as well as decisions being taken about resource allocation. This process allows adjustment to the authority's long-term vision as well as identifying priority issues to be subjected to Best Value Review. From this, the authority's framework of corporate objectives would be produced, determining where Best Value activity needed to be directed to dovetail with the council's priorities. The Corporate Review has often been referred to as being an 'authority health check', i.e. if the vision for the local authority, based on Best Value principles, is at odds with the existing culture, then a process of organisational re-engineering and cultural change must begin (Figures 2.3. and 2.4.). The Audit Commission (1999) acknowledged traditional techniques used for service and financial planning may no longer be appropriate, as local authorities were required to adopt more user-focussed approaches.

New Approaches To Support New Purposes – Best Value Requires A New Approach To Planning:

<u>Old:</u>	<u>New:</u>
• Informing the community	• Involving the community
• Department focus	• User focus
• Budget driven	• Policy driven
• Short term horizon	• Long term horizon
• Input focus	• Outcome focus

(Source: Audit Commission, 1999)

Figure 2.3.: New Approaches To Support New Purposes

Five Principles To Effective Planning.

These key principles will assist councils in improvement and change

<u>Where have we come from?</u>	<u>Where are we going to?</u>
• Closed	• Open
• Reactive	• Anticipatory
• Un-informed	• Intelligent
• Fragmented	• Coherent
• Bureaucratic	• Action-orientated

(Source: Audit Commission, 1999)

Figure 2.4.: Five Principles To Effective Planning

Figures 2.3. and 2.4. clearly reflected that local government are now required to have a different relationship with their public, arguably an ambitious challenge for them to

meet. It was no longer acceptable for a local authority merely to deliver the services solely defined by the local authority themselves to a standard which they felt appropriate. The public today have an expectation their needs should be taken into account in the local authority decision making process. The task for local authorities is now to deliver services in the most publicly accountable way possible.

### Stage 2: Agree Programme of Fundamental Performance Reviews:

Local authorities needed to agree early in the Best Value process their programme of fundamental performance review, i.e. devise a timetable stating when and in what order services would be subjected to Best Value Reviews. Whilst it was expected poorly performing services and expensive services would be subjected to a Best Value Review early in the five year rolling programme, the objective of the programme was to create an on-going cycle of Reviews to ensure continuous improvement process in all council services. Whilst *“authorities may address stronger areas of performance early on that the lessons of success can be spread ... it would be unacceptable for any authority to put off reviewing significant areas of weakness without good cause”* (Audit Commission, 1998) the programme will need to reflect the corporate planning process, the authority’s objectives and priorities determined in the earlier stage.

The programme should identify the number and scope of the various Best Value Reviews. For example, Darlington Borough Council (March 2001) agreed upon a five year programme of Best Value Reviews which included a decision to review in 2001/02 (i.e. Year One) services relating to older persons, access to services/e-government, regeneration, asset management, strategic education, waste management

and street safety and in 2002/03 (i.e. Year Two) services pertaining to lifelong learning, community safety, printing and reprographics, local taxation, benefits and awards, leisure and street environment. The programme sequence should reflect the concerns of local people and link into any community strategy, maximise the scope for innovation and align reviews to any inspections that have already been programmed. The scope of the review implemented by a local authority was expected to be sufficiently large and ambitious, whether service-specific or cross-cutting<sup>1</sup>, to ensure real challenges and early improvements in efficiency and service quality were achieved.

Certain types of Best Value authorities were instructed by central government to review specific services at set points in the rolling programme of Fundamental Performance Reviews. For example, fire authorities were instructed they had to review their Command and Control Centres in Year One, their procurement in Year Two and their Training in Year Three (County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority, 2001).

### Stage 3: Devise Corporate Systems and Framework:

Local authorities needed to develop a number of corporate systems to support their individual Best Value Service Reviews so as to ensure as far as practical the authority has a consistent approach. Corporate systems included a review model, i.e. the process that individual Reviews should follow. Some local authorities at the

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<sup>1</sup> Service Specific Reviews consider Best Value principles only in relation to the service being reviewed. Cross-cutting Reviews involve a local authority working with other public sector bodies to consider issues for which institutional boundaries are obstacles, aims and priorities are often shared. For example, health and social care and crime prevention (Sparke, 1999).

beginning of the Review process devised bespoke models while others used off-the-peg models such as the Excellence Model to help structure their own approach. For example, a Local Government Management Board (L.G.M.B.) survey conducted before Best Value was a statutory duty found that out of 221 local authorities adopting a Best Value approach, 55 (25%) of them were using the Excellence Model in some way (Audit Commission, 1998). Central government stated that rather than prescribe the process local authorities must follow, each individual local authority should develop the most appropriate model to suit their own local circumstances. The use of existing quality management models will be discussed in greater depth in Chapters Six and Seven.

As well as producing a review model, Table 2.7. highlights the other corporate frameworks necessary for implementing Best Value.

<u>Corporate Frameworks:</u>	
-	Guidance on the system, i.e. how to conduct a Best Value Review;
-	Consultation strategy, i.e. how a Best Value Review should consult with service stakeholders and the public;
-	Monitoring and reporting arrangements, i.e. how Best Value Review progress is tracked;
-	Audit framework, i.e. how to ensure Reviews achieve Best Value
(Source: Sparke, 1999)	

Table 2.7.: Corporate Frameworks

Each local authority was expected by central government to produce clear accompanying guidance explaining how the model should be applied during a Best

Value Review. Such guidance was required to ensure a consistent approach was achieved between individual Reviews within the same authority, i.e. all Reviews are undertaken to the same level of detail. As Best Value was arguably a learning experience, especially in initial implementation, it was important for each local authority to have in place a mechanism so that suggested improvements to the model and guidance could be fed back and amendments made if necessary. At some point, all Best Value Reviews would need to undertake some form of consultation, either as a one-off exercise or as a series of exercises. To reach maximum potential benefit, consultation exercises had to be clearly thought through with careful consideration being given to the audience and the information wanted, both of which would help to determine the timing and format of consultation undertaken. Effective consultation required considerable expertise. Many Best Value Review teams did not have this expertise and required their local authority to produce a clear consultation strategy giving appropriate advice and guidance to ensure consultation was conducted as effectively as possible. Each local authority had to carefully consider how it would monitor, and track progress made by the numerous Best Value Reviews being conducted at any given time. Such a monitoring mechanism ensured Reviews were completed on time and achieved their reporting deadline dates. A key element of the monitoring mechanism would be the authority's audit framework which ensured each Review fulfilled the statutory Best Value requirements.

All corporate systems needed to dovetail together to ensure the local authority's Best Value process was as robust as possible. Local authorities were required to avoid designing processes that were excessively prescriptive, instead they were encouraged to incorporate flexibility so each individual service could take into consideration their

differing histories in terms of previous scrutiny, quality and performance levels (Sparke, 2000).

The most fundamental difference between Best Value and C.C.T. were the requirements for local authorities to devise corporate systems and frameworks in order to complete service reviews, i.e. stages three and four of Table 2.6. shown earlier. To reflect this fundamental difference between the two regimes this research focussed specifically upon the process implementation issues (i.e. stages three and four of Best Value) facing local authority Emergency Management services.

#### Stage 4: Best Value Service Reviews:

A Best Value Review was required to be a fundamental re-assessment of a service; it should not simply be a justification as to why a service is provided in the way that it is. Whilst individual local authority's corporate review models may differ reflecting local needs and preferences, all Reviews should produce a baseline report detailing where a service is now and aspires to be in five years time, i.e. a 'gap analysis'. From this options can be developed for future service delivery. These options would be researched and evaluated in order to make a final recommendation as to how a service should be delivered in the future. When undertaking Best Value Reviews the legislation required local authorities to challenge, compare, consult and compete as shown in Table 2.8.

What Is Required From A Best Value Review:

In practice, the (Best Value) Review will be expected to:

- i. challenge why the particular service is needed at all, and if so whether it needed to be provided in any particular form
- ii. compare performance with others across a range of relevant indicators, taking into account the views of both service users and potential suppliers
- iii. consult with local taxpayers, service users and the wider business community in the setting of new performance targets
- iv. compete in the sense of demonstrating that the preferred means of delivering the service has been – or will be – arrived at through a competitive process.

(Source: D.E.T.R., 1998)

Table 2.8.: What Is Required From A Best Value Review

Challenge, compare, consult and compete were grouped together under what is nationally recognised as the ‘Four Cs’. The ‘Four Cs’ should run concurrently throughout Best Value Reviews as outlined in Figure 2.5. As explained earlier in this chapter the ‘Four Cs’ were used to underpin the model specifically considering the application of Best Value to Emergency Management developed and discussed in the latter chapters of this thesis. Whilst local authorities had the freedom to devise their own mechanisms to review services in-line with Best Value requirements this research investigated how these authorities proposed to review their Emergency Management services. The outcome of this investigation indicated whether or not local authorities would benefit from having a specific model to facilitate an Emergency Management Best Value Review.



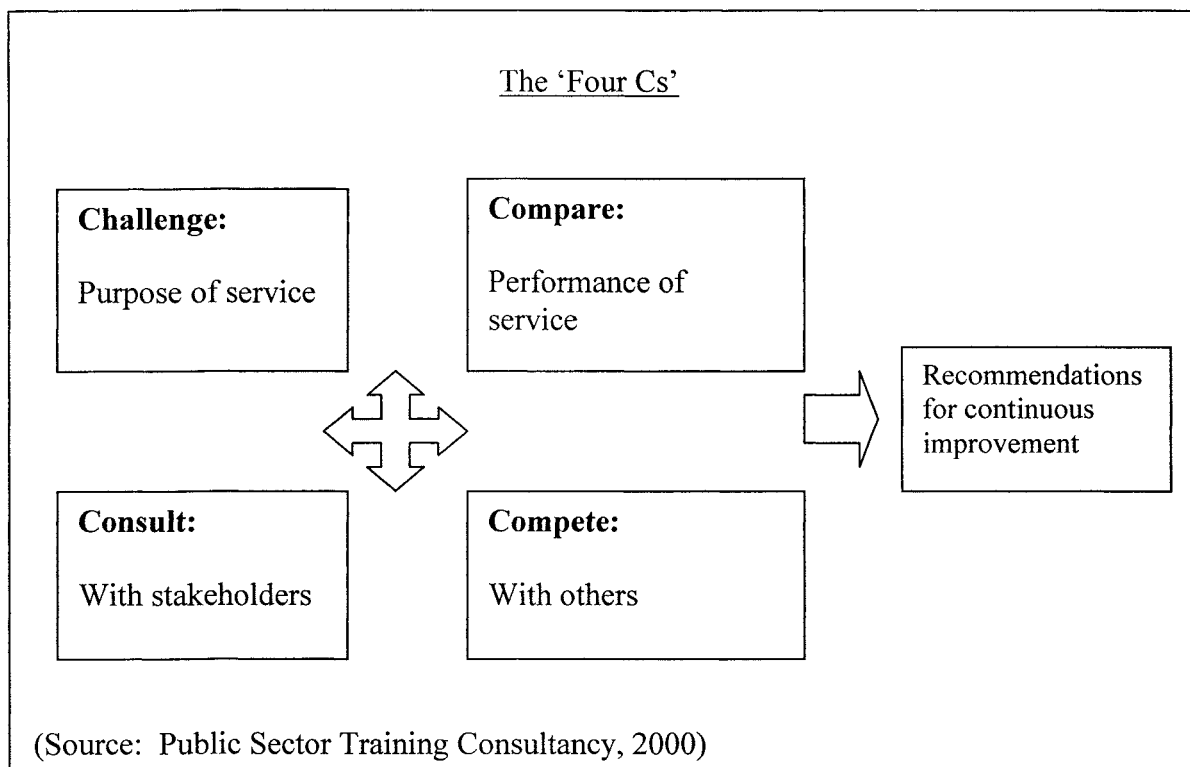


Figure 2.5.: The 'Four Cs'

Defensiveness and protectionism could potentially be encountered during a Review process as managers and staff (including those responsible for undertaking the Best Value Review) often have a fear of change (Sparke, 1999). Change was seen to be the constant theme that overarched the whole Best Value process. A contributing factor to the success of a Review would be determined by the membership and accountability of the Review Team who were responsible for project planning the Review, ensuring the 'Four Cs' are progressed and considered during decision making. To ensure stakeholders needs were represented, central government recommended Review Teams should include 'independents' as well as 'service experts' to ensure current ways of working could not distort judgements made during the Review. 'Independents' were seen as being able to view a service under Review

without any bias towards existing procedures, i.e. they could focus purely upon how to provide the ‘best’ possible service without any feelings of self-protection.

In challenging a service’s performance, a Review Team may often find the pattern of a service’s provision reflected custom and habit rather than a measured response to current circumstances. Many local authority services, mainly those not previously subjected to C.C.T., such as library services and committee services, had never been required to consider why they provide their service in the way they do or identify other ways that it could be provided. The Audit Commission believed Best Value required local authorities to challenge existing service planning approaches and adopt new methods. For example, they claimed “*traditional service-based structures*” whilst ensuring clear lines of accountability did not assist in the delivery of cross-cutting issues such as community safety and community healthcare. The Commission considered new service planning approaches were necessary to break down barriers and achieve effective co-ordination (Audit Commission, 1999).

Central government expected Best Value Reviews to challenge traditional ways of providing services, i.e. a Review must question whether a service needs to be provided, why it is provided in the way it is and how it could be improved. Local accountability required local authorities to take responsibility for acting decisively where its service performance fell short. Where an authority had a statutory responsibility for providing a particular service this could have affected the scope available to them for making radical change. For example, fire authorities have a statutory duty to provide fire safety services and as such their options for radically

changing service delivery are greatly reduced. Ultimately, the ‘challenge’ aspect of a Review should equate to a fundamental re-think of a service’s delivery.

Turning to the compare part of the process, informed comparisons between local authorities, were seen as a way to both strengthen accountability and introduce wider perspectives into Best Value Reviews. *“Performance measurement can help organisations improve performance by identifying good practice and learning from others. It can also ensure that the organisation is focused on its key priorities, and that areas of poor performance are questioned”* (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). The key issues of performance are shown in Table 2.9.

<u>“Why measure performance?”</u>	
Performance measurement can contribute to effective services.	
1.	What gets measured gets done.
2.	If you don’t measure results, you can’t tell success from failure.
3.	If you can’t see success, you can’t reward it.
4.	If you can’t reward success, you’re probably rewarding failure.
5.	If you can’t see success, you can’t learn from it.
6.	If you can’t recognise failure, you can’t correct it.
7.	If you can demonstrate results, you can win public support.
(Source: Osborne and Gaebler, 1992)	

Table 2.9.: Why Measure Performance?

Performance indicators were considered by central government to be an important aid to judgement. In certain instances, usually in front line public service performance, there was a strong case for prescribing some performance indicators nationally so as

to enable comparisons between local authorities on a common and consistent basis (Sparke, 1999). Statutory performance indicators were prescribed annually by the Audit Commission and results have to be published by local authorities to their community. Examples of these indicators include areas such as ‘dealing with the public’ and ‘refuse collection’. In some core services, central government set minimum standards or targets, where Parliament had taken the view that there was an overwhelming national case for doing so. For example, ministers have set national performance targets for the police (Audit Commission, 1998). However, there was wide variation in service delivery and as a consequence, there was also a demand for local authorities themselves to generate measures of performance. For example, to fulfil its aim of working together with their partners to achieve annual, sustainable growth in the area Darlington Borough Council (2001) produced a series of local performance indicators including *“Through business promotion and development, directly assist in the creation of 400 new jobs in Darlington”* and *“Continue to promote Darlington as a visitor attraction and achieve a 5% increase in visitor numbers during the year which will take the target to 88,380 visitors”*.

The Audit Commission (1998) perceived local targets as being important for many reasons. First, such targets could be used to inform the public of performance levels which the local authority would achieve. To assist this local authorities informed staff and contractors what they were expected to achieve. Ultimately the Audit Commission (1998) considered such targets as vital because they provided a *“baseline”* upon which a judgement could be made of whether performance is good or poor.

Best Value encouraged local authorities to set local standards (expectations regarding levels and quality of service) and targets (commitment to achieve stated level of service) in order to collect local performance indicator data to demonstrate the extent to which the authority was meeting local standards and targets. The Audit Commission (1998) considered local performance indicators should be developed because they provided users and providers with an expected level of service performance. These would also be used by providers to allocate resources effectively in order to meet policy priorities and encouraged a culture of continuous improvement. The public could be involved in setting such indicators thereby encouraging them to participate in the planning of services. In addition these indicators allowed local authority services to be judged in the context of their local setting as opposed to national indicators, thereby helping to enhance and strengthen local accountability.

Increasingly sophisticated approaches to set and use performance indicators have been developed in consultation with service users and others (Sparke, 1999). Some authorities joined together to develop benchmarking analyses which then enabled them to learn from each other as well as other public sector bodies, private organisations and organisations from the voluntary sector in order to improve their own performance. For example, the Core Cities Group, comprised of the cities of Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Newcastle, Manchester, Sheffield and Liverpool, were all perceived to have similar local circumstances and problems, and, as a consequence, shared many of the same policy priorities. Local indicators could be developed that were appropriate to all of them whilst also sharing best practice between them (Audit Commission, 1998).

The third ‘C’ compete, unlike the former C.C.T. regime, did not necessarily require services to be privatised nor specify how a service should be provided. Whilst there was no compulsion to tender services a local authority could not assume the best way to deliver a service was via the existing in-house method (D.E.T.R., 1998). Service quality and cost should both be taken into consideration when selecting the most appropriate way of delivering a service (D.E.T.R., 1998). This was a significant difference when compared to C.C.T. whereby service quality was often overlooked as emphasis focussed purely upon cost. Competition continued to be an essential management tool for securing improvement and demonstrating in a transparent way Best Value was being achieved. Price and quality were not the only important indicators considered by central government with respect to ‘compete’, they also considered the capability and willingness of a local authority to achieve year-on-year increases in quality and enhanced value for money (Sparke, 1999). Central government believed encouraging a healthy and diverse market for local services should not be seen as burden on local authorities but as a necessary step in obtaining Best Value for local people. Whilst C.C.T. had many critics it was important to acknowledge that one of the regime’s key strengths, i.e. to widen the choice of local authority service delivery techniques, was also a key component of Best Value thereby ensuring difficult management issues were not ignored.

Local authorities were encouraged by central government to hold open and constructive dialogue with those organisations that may offer expertise, innovative skills or financial resources with respect to implementing Best Value. For example, emergency services and local authorities in the North East of England held

discussions with Intelligent Energy Limited (2002), a private company offering an environmentally friendly electrochemical reactor that could continuously convert chemical energy directly into electricity with the added benefit of significantly reduced carbon levels in operations. It was hoped this would encourage new providers and therefore create new options for delivering quality public services. The Government was also keen to encourage partnership working as an approach that could bring additional private sector resources to areas where they are needed and enable local authorities to plan ahead with more confidence. Where an authority was unable to consider partnership options, because current legislation required a service to be carried out by the authority itself, then the Government was also prepared in principle to consider enabling them to do so using the provisions of the 'Deregulation and Contracting Out Act 1994' if this was thought to be helpful in achieving Best Value and if appropriate safeguards to ensure propriety and fairness could be ensured by other means. Ultimately, local authorities were required to guarantee efficient and effective local services irrespective of who actually delivered the service.

Consultation was another vital component of the Best Value process since a culture in which local authorities decided what services were to be provided on the basis of what suited them as providers ceased to be an option under the 'Local Government Act 1999'. Best Value objectivity has been defined in terms of 'quality' and 'value', both of which are judgements, therefore active consultation with stakeholders was essential before a final judgement could be made. Sustained improvements to services were considered more likely where those who used and paid for them were given a greater say in how they are run (Sparke, 1999). Dungey (1999) supported this view by claiming local authorities had a special relationship with the public as they are "*both*

*citizens and service users*”, and this relationship should be fully utilised to ensure the public’s needs were incorporated into the Best Value process. Public consultation was seen as a key element of not only Best Value but also the wider local government reform programme because it encouraged the public to take ownership of local authorities and attempted to reverse the perceived democratic deficit of the past. Local authorities were seen by central government as having much to gain from having an informed public. However, this implied central government assumed the public want to be involved and that their requirements could be translated into action.

The Government did not prescribe how consultation should be conducted; indeed it was unlikely a single mechanism would have been appropriate in all circumstances given the heterogeneous composition of the public. Local authorities were required by central government to create mechanisms that maximised the prospect of receiving representative and balanced views, i.e. consultation was to be meaningful and result in feedback being provided to consultees and not merely a ‘tick in the box’ exercise. There were many forms of consultation available for consideration, as suggested within Table 2.10. The form of consultation chosen was, most probably, influenced by the nature of the service, consideration as to what suited local circumstances best (to ensure traditionally hard-to-reach groups are included as much as possible) and built upon existing good practice consultation processes. Consultation had to occur sufficiently in advance of any final decision making process to allow time for consultees to react and for the local authority to give full consideration to their responses. Local authorities had to give feedback to consultees at the end of the consultation process clearly stating the final decisions made along with a rationale as to why such decisions were made. Whilst a key strength of C.C.T. was recognised as



ensuring local authorities defined to their community the type of service (including its specifications) they could expect many critics argued there was little scope for local authorities to consider local needs. Indeed, there was no requirement nor expectation under C.C.T. that local authorities would actively consult with their local community. However, a key component of Best Value was local authorities had to actively consult with their local community to identify their needs and cater for them accordingly.

Some Methods Of Developing Public Involvement:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation events – public meetings, exhibitions, open days, community conferences and workshops, written consultation and information campaigns.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• User groups and forums – service and issue based user groups and panels, client based groups and forums, civic forums, area committees, neighbourhood forums, working with parish councils.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with existing groups and campaigns – Local Agenda 21, campaign groups, voluntary sector, business organisations.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More formal methods of research – surveys, qualitative research, case studies, diaries, statistical and desk research, experiments and market testing, systematic observation.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberative methods – citizen’s juries, deliberative polling, citizen’s panels, panel studies.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving information – complaints and complaints monitoring, suggestion schemes, satisfaction monitoring, management statistics/monitoring, using feedback from staff and councillors.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic democracy – internet, video, cable TV and local and community radio.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referenda and citizens ballots.</li> </ul>

(Source: Dungey, 1999)

Table 2.10.: Some Methods Of Developing Public Involvement

A local authority could have found there were some issues where public consultation and involvement were deemed to be inappropriate. In these circumstances local authorities were expected to be honest about identifying these issues and explain clearly to the public why their participation was not sought.

At this point a Review Team would be in a position to select the most suitable option from central government's criteria for future service delivery, as outlined in Table 2.11.

Options For Future Service Delivery:

- Pull-out;
- Internal service management;
- Joint commissioning;
- Market testing;
- Externalisation (1) – service is provided by external organisations that compete to do the work;
- Externalisation (2) – a contract supplemented by a formal ‘partnership’ agreement;
- Transfer.

(Source: Improvement and Development Agency, 1999)

Table 2.11.: Options For Future Service Delivery

Best Value Review teams had to consider how services could be most effectively delivered in the future. The findings of the ‘Four Cs’ should be applied to each of the seven options set by central government (as shown in Table 2.11.) to identify those options that were most suitable. Maintaining the status quo, i.e. continuing to deliver

services with no change, was not an option allowed by central government under Best Value. If a local authority had determined a service was not needed then the most appropriate option would be to ‘pull out’ of delivering the service, i.e. to no longer offer the service. Alternatively, a Review Team could have decided there was both a strong need for the service to continue and for it to continue to be delivered via the existing internal service management provider. However, for this to have been an acceptable option, the current level of service delivery had to be improved and enhanced in-line with Review Team findings. For example, a current service may be improved via a restructure and a change in allocation of roles and responsibilities. A Review Team could have found whilst there was still a need for a service to be delivered, it would be delivered more effectively by the local authority in conjunction with another body (or bodies). In this instance, joint commissioning would be a considered option and the local authority could be jointly involved in the future management of the service. If a Review Team was unsure how effective and competitive a service is then they may decide the most appropriate option was to use market testing. In this instance, existing internal service management would compete with external service providers via a tendering process to determine who ‘wins’ the work. This process was similar to C.C.T. except that it was a voluntary not a compulsory option. A Review Team may have determined that for a service to be most appropriately delivered external providers should have a key role. There are two types of externalisation a Review Team may consider. First, a service could be delivered entirely by the most appropriate external provider as identified via a formal tendering process. In this scenario the relationship between the local authority and the external provider becomes one of client and service provider as set out in a formal contract agreed upon by both parties. However, a Review Team could decide that a

local authority need to have a greater involvement in how the service is delivered by an external provider and in this instance a contract supplemented by a formal ‘partnership’ would be more appropriate. In this situation, there is greater emphasis on shared objectives and developing a relationship with the supplier. The final option was that of transfer. A Review Team could decide whilst there was still a need for a service it was no longer appropriate for it to be delivered by the local authority. Here the service or ‘role’ would be transferred and provided by another organisation such as a residents association or a charity. The local authority, however, would continue to have a residual role such as a seat on the board or by subsidising service delivery to the public (Improvement and Development Agency and L.G.A., 1999). For some local authority services Review teams could have identified several possible options for future service delivery whilst for others, depending upon the nature of the service, the number of options could have been limited. Once appropriate options were identified, a Review Team provided justifications (in the form of evidence) for their choice of options and presented them to Elected Members who in turn made the final decision.

#### Stage 5: Set Performance And Efficiency Targets:

The principal outcome of a Best Value Review was the setting of demanding yet realistic performance targets in respect of the Audit Commission’s definitions of ‘economy’, ‘efficiency’ and ‘effectiveness’ coupled with an action plan for their implementation to achieve sustained improvement. A local authority had to be able to justify and provide evidence for choosing their targets. Sparke (1999) proposed one way of ensuring sustained improvements was to set targets for the short-term (one

year) as well as the longer-term (five years). This would provide an appropriate benchmark against which local people, auditors and inspectors could judge whether or not local authorities were achieving Best Value. Targets had to be achievable, meaningful, easily understood and measurable. These targets are also expected not to distort behaviour or cause adverse consequences to other elements of local authority service. In setting local targets authorities had to consider the requirement to raise performance (in terms of cost efficiency and quality) in-line with the standards of the top quartile of local authorities (Sparke, 1999). Local people had to be able to monitor the implementation of such targets and the local authority's progress via the publication of an annual Best Value Performance Plan. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, stages three and four of Best Value (i.e. the devision of corporate systems and frameworks then undertaking service reviews) represented the key differences between C.C.T. and the new legislative duty. Stages three and four required local authorities to address those perceived weak areas of C.C.T., i.e. the use of market testing and partnership work plus the consideration of service quality as well as cost, whilst building upon the perceived strengths of C.C.T., i.e. consideration of service cost, employing different service delivery options, ensuring difficult management issues are tackled and informing the local community of the service standard they can expect. The interim evaluation findings of English and Welsh Best Value pilot authorities presented by Warwick and Cardiff Universities (as shown earlier in Tables 2.4. and 2.5.) suggested whilst progress was being made to achieve Best Value, and overcome the weak areas of C.C.T., several process issues were problematic. For example, Warwick (Sparke, 2000) reported 'challenge' had been more difficult than expected by pilots, the rigour of 'compare' activities varied considerably from pilot to pilot, most pilots were skirting the issue of 'compete' in favour of improving the in-

house provider and ‘consult’ mechanisms with the public were still in development. These findings suggested local authorities would benefit from assistance in resolving these process related issues.

#### Stage 6: Publish Best Value Performance Plan (B.V.P.P.):

Each local authority had to produce a Best Value Performance Plan (B.V.P.P.), originally referred to by the Government as a ‘Local Performance Plan’, by 31 March each year that detailed the targets for service improvement which resulted from all Best Value Reviews undertaken along with an explanation of how the authority plans to achieve these targets. A summary Plan had to be distributed to all households within the area and local people could, if they wanted to, request copies of the full B.V.P.P.. The B.V.P.P. was the principle means by which local authorities were held accountable for the quality and efficiency of their services. Both the summary and full B.V.P.P.s contained feedback sheets upon which members of the public could make their comments and return them to the local authority for appropriate follow-up action.

#### Stage 7: Audit – Internal and External

Best Value Reviews had to be internally and externally audited to ensure compliance with Best Value legislation. Local authorities’ internal auditors had a core role in Best Value to ensure their authority’s internal controls and self-assessment procedures complied with legislation, the corporate framework was being followed and the

fundamental review programme took into account risk based audit planning. Internal monitoring of Best Value Review outcomes was seen by central government as essential to ensure progress and momentum was maintained (Audit Commission, 2000).

It was equally important there was an external check on the reliability and accuracy of information contained in B.V.P.Ps. and an assurance plans were consistent with central government's Best Value Performance Management framework (shown earlier in Figure 2.2.). Best Value legislation required each local authority's external auditor, appointed by the Audit Commission, to undertake an audit of the B.V.P.P.. This audit, an annual requirement, produced findings and recommendations that were then sent to the local authority, the Audit Commission and where relevant, the Secretary of State. Local authorities were required to publish their Auditor's report. The Auditor's report focussed upon three key areas of compliance, performance information as well as corporate review and management arrangements. Compliance was determined by assessing whether or not the B.V.P.P. complied with legislation. The B.V.P.P. had to provide local people with a summary as to how the local authority had performed in the current, and previous, year against performance standards and targets. The final area of the audit was to assess the appropriateness of an authority's procedures in achieving continuous improvement and implementing the 'Four Cs' (Sparke, 1999). From such an audit there were a number of potential actions that the auditor could take:

- make recommendations to amend the B.V.P.P.;
- make a recommendation to the Audit Commission for a Best Value inspection;
- make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for intervention.

### Stage 8: Inspection:

Audit and inspection are two separate phases of the Best Value process. However, both phases were designed to identify possible under-performance at an early stage and to help local authorities address the likely causes without the need for sanctions and other forms of intervention. It was important local authorities were able to demonstrate in a rigorous, unambiguous and public way they were achieving continuous improvement in all services. Central government decided each local authority would be closely scrutinised by an independent Inspectorate. Many services were already reviewed by existing specialist inspectorates, e.g. HM Fire Services Inspectorate and the Social Services Inspectorate. Those specialist inspectorates already in existence inspected Best Value Reviews that took place within the services they were responsible for overseeing. This was achieved by incorporating the requirements of Best Value into their existing inspection models. The Audit Commission gave responsibility for inspecting housing services and those other services that were previously not subjected to any form of inspection to a newly created Best Value Inspectorate.

To keep the inspectors focused upon the requirements of Best Value Reviews and the 'Four Cs' six key questions were devised, as shown in Figure 2.6. During the inspection process, Inspectors assessed the information and evidence provided by the Best Value Review team in order to answer these questions. In addition Inspectors would also speak to different types of service stakeholders, e.g. Chief Officers and service users.



The inspection process consisted of seven sequential phases as indicated in Table 2.12. At the end of each inspection, the Inspectors would make two judgements based upon the two questions of “how good are the services inspected?” and “will they improve in the way that Best Value requires?” (Audit Commission, 2000). The author considered it was fair to assume whilst Best Value Inspectors were answering these two questions they would also be assessing the rigour of the process employed during the actual Review. The answer to the first question was rated in stars ranging from three stars representing ‘excellent’ and no stars representing ‘poor’. The second question was rated on a scale running from ‘yes’ to ‘probably’ to ‘unlikely’ to ‘no’. The Inspector’s findings were then set out in a final report along with the evidence that led to their conclusions. Final reports were produced in accordance with the Inspectorate’s standard report structure, as shown in Table 2.13.

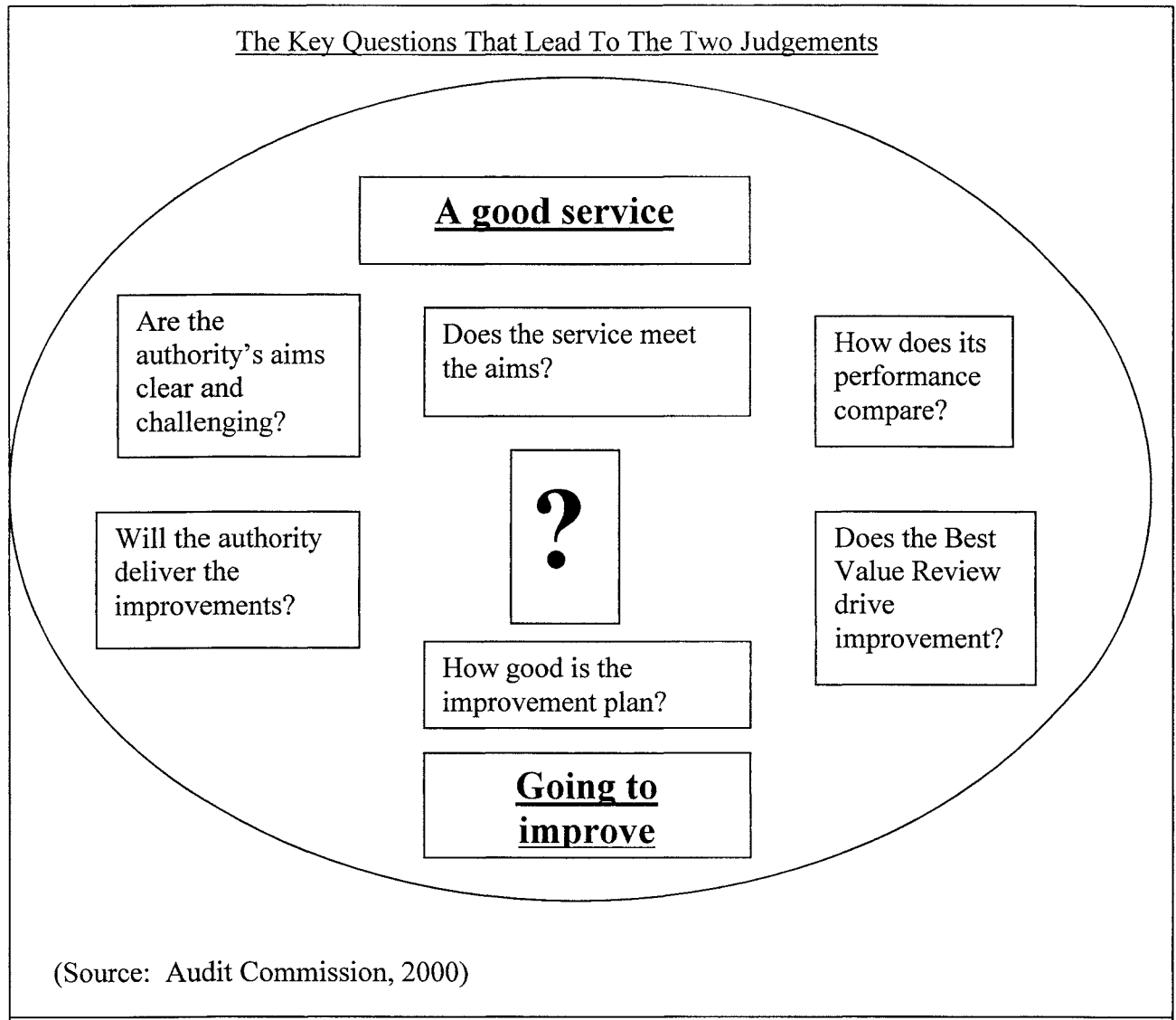


Figure 2.6.: The Key Questions That Lead To The Two Judgements

The Best Value Inspection Process

Phase	Task	Timing	Purpose
1	Understand the context	4 weeks before inspection	Research reports produced.
2	Review performance	4 weeks before inspection	Inspection team form initial impression of Review. Draft inspection plan is reviewed by local lead inspector, who will challenge the inspection team to justify its initial impressions, and question whether its plan for inspection is practical and relevant
3	Brief the authority	4 weeks before inspection	Local authority can challenge focus and initial impressions of inspection team.
4	Carry out reality checks	1 to 4 weeks on site	Inspectors gather evidence to answer key inspection questions and sustain overall judgements. This is the most visible part of the inspection process.
5	Present interim challenge	1 to 4 weeks on site	First step in reporting back to the local authority the findings of the inspection. This session will be ran in a way that encourages reactions and challenges from the authority. The onus is on the authority to provide additional evidence/information if it disagrees with the inspectors judgements and recommendations.
6	Publish final report	1 to 2 weeks afterwards	Made publicly available both locally and nationally.
7	Carry out follow-up inspection	The focus and timing of follow-up inspections will differ from case to case.	Where progress is not being made, and serious problems continue, follow up may take longer in order to identify whether additional direction or intervention should be recommended.

(Source: Audit Commission, 2000)

Table 2.12.: The Best Value Inspection Process

### Inspectorate's Standard Report Structure

1. Summary of judgements for local people
2. Recommendations for improvement
3. Background
4. Findings: how good are the services?
  - Are the authority's aims clear and challenging?
  - Does the service meet the aims?
  - How does its performance compare?
5. Findings: are they going to improve?
  - Does the Best Value Review drive improvement?
  - How good is the improvement plan?
  - Will the authority deliver the improvements?

(Source: Audit Commission, 2000)

Table 2.13.: Inspectorate's Standard Report Structure

The Audit Commission (2000) claimed inspection reports allowed the public, the local authority and central government to see if, and to what extent, Best Value was being achieved. Such reports also highlighted and shared best practices. The audit and inspection processes were intended to highlight areas of concern including any 'failure of substance' or 'failure of process'. A 'failure of substance' could include unit costs being persistently high when compared to other local authorities, a deterioration in service, a failure to improve, a failure to achieve local targets or a failure to meet national performance standards. A 'failure of process' could include a failure to consult/respond to consultation, a failure to review an area of under performance, a failure to complete a review of all services within a five year cycle, or a failure to set demanding challenges.

Even an authority recognised as being good or succeeding in achieving Best Value could from time to time fail to achieve the demanding targets they had set for themselves. In these circumstances central government would expect the problems, once highlighted by Inspectors, to be addressed and rectified quickly without the need for external action. In this scenario, the local authority would determine and implement appropriate remedial action to get services ‘back-on-track’ to meeting their targets. Inspectors would make follow-up visits to these authorities to ensure remedial action had occurred and was working. If the scale of failure was so serious that action was needed to secure improvements urgently, e.g. where the failure was in respect of national standards and local action had proved inadequate, then the government were committed to providing external intervention to obtain Best Value. However, intervention by the Secretary of State was an exception rather than the rule, as local accountability would not be served if intervention were undertaken as a matter of course (Sparke, 1999). Intervention was viewed by central government as only being applied if it would have a beneficial effect and ensure local people were not left vulnerable. It was claimed well directed intervention could mean less intervention overall although some could argue is the Secretary of State best placed to intervene in such services. For those local authorities unhappy with the Best Value Inspection process a formal appeal procedure was in place. Such an appeal process was consistent with an attempt by central government to overcome the often voiced criticism that C.C.T. led to many local authorities being resentful and opposed to such central instruction regarding how to deliver public services.

On a more positive note as well as service limitations, Best Value audits and inspections highlighted best practice. In February 1999, the government launched its Beacon Council Scheme which aimed to give recognition to those local authorities considered to be at the leading edge of service delivery. Beacon councils were seen as those authorities who showed *“good performance across the board; excellent performance in particular service area/cross cutting themes; innovation and good practice; demonstrate community engagement as core”* (D.E.T.R., 1999). It was the intention to ultimately grant beacon status local authorities new legislative freedoms and powers not available to other authorities. These authorities would act as role model pace setters and centres of excellence to encourage other local authorities to achieve service improvement and innovation.

#### The Impact Of Devolved Administrations On Best Value:

Since 1997 devolved administrations had been formed in both Scotland (‘Scotland Act 1998’) and Wales (‘Government Of Wales Act 1998’). For Wales, the Welsh National Assembly was empowered to carry out the functions in relation to Best Value, in contrast to the Secretary of State for English authorities. In particular, the Welsh National Assembly could specify performance indicators and performance standards, as well as prescribing the procedure to be followed in Best Value Reviews and the content and timetable of performance plans. In Scotland, whilst there was no specific Best Value legislative duty for local authorities all local authorities agreed to adopt Best Value on a voluntary basis. The Scottish Executive at the time of writing was in consultation with the relevant bodies to determine if, and in what form, legislation was required. Scottish Councils, unlike those in England and Wales, were

already under statutory duty to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources as defined in Section 122A of the ‘Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973’. It was envisaged Best Value would build upon this existing duty. As in England and Wales, Best Value in Scotland was subject to external inspection.

#### Evaluation of Early Implementation Of Best Value:

This chapter has provided an overview of the background to Best Value. It has explained what Best Value is and how the process should be undertaken by a local authority and presented detailed findings from those Best Value pilot authorities. In conclusion, the chapter provides an overview of the current situation regarding Best Value in England, Scotland and Wales by considering experiences from early examples of its implementation. It is important to remember Best Value was still a relatively new duty upon local authorities and will be evolving over the coming years.

The Government stated in 1998 *“When fully in place, the Best Value regime will give the government greater confidence that resources are not being wasted and that services are being delivered efficiently and effectively ...”* (D.E.T.R., 1998). To date there have been mixed results following the implementation of Best Value. The London Borough of Islington’s Best Value committee projected they would save £7 million by outsourcing half their housing repair contracts and retaining only 9 repair contracts (worth £18 million) within their Islington Building Services (IBS). Roger McKenzie, Chairman of the Best Value Committee, explained this decision was made because it was considered to be the option most likely to improve the service received by tenants. However, McKenzie stressed all service contracts would be monitored on

an on-going basis (Burton, July 1998). By comparison the London Borough of Wandsworth have criticised the costs involved in complying with the “*paper chase*” involved within the Best Value process. The Borough claimed Best Value could potentially cost them an additional £500,000. Indeed they perceived few people in local government believed Best Value (particularly the scrutiny aspect) would lead to any improvements in service or reap any financial benefits (Burton, March 2000). The mixed results experienced by Islington and Wandsworth mirror the mixed results achieved by all local authorities during the C.C.T. regime, i.e. some saved money and improved services whilst others did not. As Best Value progresses and more results become available a more accurate judgement can be made regarding whether or not Best Value will be more successful than C.C.T. in achieving improved services and efficiency savings.

The trade unions, most notably Unison and the G.M.B., have expressed many concerns regarding Best Value. The local government group of Unison passed a motion stating Best Value was a “*greater threat*” than C.C.T. in terms of declining service standards, reductions in jobs, pay and conditions. Unison voiced several other concerns including that outsourced services would not be subjected to Best Value inspections and this could potentially encourage local authorities to outsource in order to avoid the process. Unison also believed the use of competition and performance measurement were not defined clearly enough and ultimately Best Value was not achievable given the current levels of local government funding (Jameson, June 1999). It has been discussed earlier in this chapter that Best Value, from an economist’s perspective, is potentially more about economy than efficiency. With this in mind, a counter argument to the Unison claim is that to achieve Best Value, a



local authority must undergo the arguably painful experience of reducing costs in all areas including staffing. In addition, an economist could argue an externalised service not being subjected to a Best Value inspection is irrelevant as it is subject continually to the market test. However, the G.M.B. believed the privatisation route was not beneficial to service delivery because it was simply a way to achieve lowest cost with no regard for service quality or impact upon employees. The G.M.B. found almost half of the local authorities they surveyed did not involve trade unions in Best Value evaluation. In response to this criticism, the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (D.T.L.R.) stated Best Value could not be blamed for services being privatised, instead Best Value required local authorities to determine the best way to provide services from the users perspective and not the providers (Guyoncourt, September 2001). The Audit Commission's Best Value Director Wendy Thomson disagreed with the views of trade unions when she stated *"the first round of Best Value inspections paints an 'encouraging picture' ... Councils are 'demonstrating ambition and innovation while providing quality services to their residents'"* (Edwards, September 2000).

Edwards (September 2000) reported the first tranche of inspections concluded:

- Bolton's Legal Services Department was excellent but unlikely to improve
- Dudley's Waste Management Service was good but unlikely to improve
- Newham London Borough Council's Passenger Transport Service was good and likely to improve
- Pembrokeshire Council's Tourist Information service was good but unlikely to improve

- Sefton Metropolitan's Building Services Department was good but unlikely to improve
- Sutton London Borough Council's Housing Service was fair but would improve

Some local authorities have been critical of the way in which Best Value inspections have been carried out. Calpin (2001) reported a survey commissioned by SoLACE found that whilst some Chief Executives found Best Value Inspectors to be "*knowledgeable and experienced*", the majority had experienced problems in the inspection process. In response, an Audit Commission spokesperson stated the Best Value Inspection service undertook many inspections and each one was different and a learning experience for both the local authority and the inspector. This issue will be considered in greater depth in Chapter Four.

The Audit Commission (December 2001) stated as a result of Best Value, performance had improved over a number of performance indicators, most local authorities were now more *au fait* with the needs of their local community and more open about their performance levels. However, the Commission reported many authorities had yet to get to grips with the most challenging elements of Best Value and almost two thirds of councils were coasting or performing poorly. The Commission considered that often it was because local authorities lacked the will to ask challenging questions or the vision to tackle difficult choices that poor performance has perpetuated. The Commission considered local authorities should focus on fewer, more strategic reviews and conduct reviews that lead to demonstrable improvements to the local community. These findings suggested there were perhaps

fundamental flaws in the processes being used by local authorities to undertake the ‘challenge’ aspect of Best Value.

Table 2.14. details the key findings produced by the Warwick University Business School in their final research into the Best Value pilots. The University stated in its report, commissioned by the former D.E.T.R., that pilot authorities had found ‘challenge’ and ‘compete’ to be very difficult, to the extent many did not tackle whether they needed to provide services (i.e. challenge) instead they focussed upon how to improve the services. The issue of competition was viewed as being “*politically contentious*” with many pilots opting to improve their non-competitive services rather than outsourcing them (Jameson, August 2001). This perhaps suggested local authorities were going against the actual principle of Best Value or were unable to fully complete the process.

Warwick University Business School

Key Findings From Final Research Into Best Value Pilots:

- Political and staff involvement in the process was patchy.
- The councils found the process more time consuming and costly than expected.
- The councils felt they had no influence on statutory frameworks (a claim refuted by D.E.T.R.).
- They felt they learned from each other.
- Many felt the programme had improved their relations with central government.
- Councils increasingly concentrated their efforts on the areas which would provide the most results.

(Source: Jameson, August 2001)

Table 2.14.: Warwick University Business School – Key Findings From Final Research Into Best Value Pilots

The author considered these findings implied several process issues remained as problematic for pilot authorities, i.e. the involvement of Elected Members and staff in ‘consult’ activities as well as concerns about cost and time implications of implementing Best Value. These problematic issues will be considered by the author later in the thesis when exploring the implementation of Best Value in local authority Emergency Management provision.

In contrast, the Cardiff Business School identified Best Value had improved services and accountability but had not resulted in cost savings. Specifically, start up costs and staff time had increased costs although it was recognised efficiency savings could cut costs in the longer-term (Jameson, April 2000). Table 2.15. highlights the main

findings of the Cardiff Business School. However, the W.L.G.A. had expressed concerns that approaches towards the ‘compete’ aspect of Best Value were “*uncertain and rudimentary*” in Wales because of the low quality performance information produced and the lacking ability of Elected Members and officers to use such information (Burton, June 1999). In light of these concerns many organisations, including the W.L.G.A., began to explore alternative ways in which local authority services could be improved in the future without Best Value (Burton, October 2001).

<u>Cardiff University Business School</u> <u>Key Findings From Final Research Into Best Value</u>	
-	Implementing Best Value in pilots was ‘slower and more difficult than originally thought by central or local government. The regime is also likely to need time to develop fully’.
-	Officers and members believe Best Value is better than C.C.T.
-	Further consideration needs to be given to issues concerning resources, expertise, performance information and the role of members.
-	Efforts should shift from processes to action that will improve service.
(Source: Jameson, April 2000)	

Table 2.15.: Cardiff University Business School – Key Findings From Final Research Into Best Value

As with the earlier Warwick findings, Cardiff’s findings shown in Table 2.15. revealed several process issues for consideration as part of this research, i.e. how resources, expertise, performance information and the role of Elected Members could be improved. In addition, Cardiff reported many pilot authorities had experienced difficulties in implementing Best Value finding the process to be slower and more

difficult than originally thought. This suggested some local authorities could perhaps benefit from having a support mechanism they could then use to assist them in implementing and developing Best Value.

In October 2001, Stephen Byers announced a three month review of the Best Value process aimed at reducing bureaucracy and considering the evaluation findings of Warwick and Cardiff while also striving to raise standards (Edwards, October 2001). In November 2001, the government appointed a team to review Best Value. This team, headed by local government minister Nick Raynsford, considered five aspects of Best Value, i.e. delivering better service, greater fairness to staff, consider necessary legislative changes, greater involvement of front-line staff, employees' and trade unions as well as identifying more cost-effective local services for local people (Edwards, November 2001). As a result of this Review, the number of Best Value Performance Indicators applicable to English councils was reduced (Edwards November 2001). In February 2002, Dr Alan Whitehead, a local government minister, reported that the deadline for publication of B.V.P.P.s would be extended from 31 March to 30 June. He considered this "*will make it a more robust statement of performance because it is based on final out-turn information rather than estimates*" (Burton, February 2002). In-line with this the deadline date for auditing B.V.P.P.s changed from 30 June to 31 December accordingly. However, arguably the most radical outcome of the Review was local authorities were no longer required to review all functions within a five year period. Whitehead explained this would allow local authorities "*to concentrate on more important priorities*" rather than "*every small service in order to comply with the regulations*" (Burton, February 2002).

At the same time as the central government review (i.e. Autumn 2001), a joint summit was held between the W.L.G.A. and the Welsh Assembly. The outcome of this summit was to replace Best Value in Wales with “*an improvement contract based on similar lines to local strategic partnerships*” (to be known as the Wales Programme For Improvement) (Edwards, October 2001). This contract, which is “*effectively a re-badging and re-launching of Best Value*” aimed to cut bureaucracy and re-focus on service delivery rather than processes. This approach was identified as “*a new beginning for council delivery in Wales*” rather than the former Best Value that was perceived as having an “*unhealthy pre-occupation with a one-size-fits-all approach to local services in Wales*”. This new approach has been termed “*the Welsh way*” whereby local authorities examine their own services with appraisals being carried out by Elected Members and managers from other local authorities (Hanlon, 2001).

In contrast, in May 2002 the Deputy Minister for Finance and Public Services, Peter Peacock, launched the Scottish Executive’s ‘Local Government Bill’. This Bill, aimed at modernising local government and improving services, included “*a duty of Best Value, which will remove C.C.T. and place the Best Value framework on a statutory footing to improve accountability and make sure that scrutiny is rigorous*” (Rodrick, 2002).

Best Value is an evolving concept, and to reinforce these changes and some differences in England, Scotland and Wales, it appears the vast majority of local government stakeholders believe local authority services must continually strive to improve to the benefit of the end users.

Throughout this chapter strong reference has been made to the extent to which Best Value differs fundamentally from C.C.T. in two ways. First, the requirement for local authorities to develop corporate systems and frameworks and secondly for them to undertake Reviews of their services by applying the 'Four Cs'. It is also apparent from the work undertaken by Warwick and Cardiff Universities that many pilot authorities experienced a variety of process related problems in implementing Best Value. The purpose of this research is to look specifically at the implementation and facilitation of Best Value Reviews in local authority Emergency Management provision. In order to consider this issue in greater depth the next chapter will provide an overview of the origins of local authority Emergency Management, explain how it has developed into the service that it is today and identify those unique service issues that must be considered when embarking upon a Best Value Review. Consideration will be given later in the thesis to the way in which such a Best Value Review process can be implemented and supported.



## **CHAPTER THREE – THE LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE**

### Introduction

This chapter describes the local authority service variously known as Emergency Management, Emergency Planning or Civil Protection. It places the service in its historical context and against its current legislative framework and outlines the main issues currently facing the service. These issues include the need for Emergency Management, its statutory basis, structure, the over-riding national philosophy for Emergency Management, funding and technological resources. The chapter concludes by identifying some of the potential issues that must be addressed when applying a Best Value Review to an Emergency Management service based upon a S.W.O.T. analysis of the existing U.K. Emergency Management provision. These issues are related to the key findings from the literature covering Emergency Management, the majority of which are perhaps, as expected, from statutory or professional rather than academic sources.

### Background

Emergency Management is a service delivered by various types of public agency, which seeks to minimise the effects of emergencies upon local communities. Table 3.1. identifies the types of public agency with a responsibility for Emergency Management within the U.K.

<u>Examples Of Public Agency</u>	
<u>Type of public agency:</u>	<u>Examples:</u>
Central government:	Cabinet Office; Environment Agency; Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions; Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; regional government offices.
Emergency services:	Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard, British Transport Police
Local government:	County Councils, Shire District Councils, Unitary authorities, Metropolitan Districts
Utilities:	Electricity, Water, Gas, Telecommunications
Voluntary organizations:	British Red Cross, Womens Royal Voluntary Service, RAYNET, Samaritans
Military:	Army, Navy, R.A.F., Territorial Army
Private enterprise:	Nuclear installations, chemical sites, other industrial concerns

Table 3.1.: Examples Of Public Agency

In the United States, there is a national agency called the Federal Emergency Management Agency (F.E.M.A.) that has overall responsibility for ensuring that all the activities of the other agencies are properly co-ordinated and managed. Table 3.1. shows that in the U.K., whilst there is a diverse range of public agencies each with a role to play in Emergency Management dependent upon the specific type of emergency, there is no single agency with overall responsibility for ensuring emergency planning and response forms a cohesive whole. During emergencies affecting wide-areas of the U.K., the

absence of such a single agency becomes more apparent as demarcation disputes between the multitudes of organizations identified in Table 3.1. can potentially hamper the effectiveness of joint response. For example, during the fuel shortages of 2000, the Department of Trade and Industry (Dti) designated certain filling stations as being for use by ‘essential users’ only. In essence this meant that anyone not identified as an ‘essential user’ would be refused the sale of fuel from such stations. At first it was deemed to be the duty of the Police to make such refusals on the basis this was a law and order issue. However, the Police refused to take on this obligation, stating they had no emergency powers to restrict trade and believed local authorities would be the most appropriate organization to perform this role. Local authorities also did not consider they had the powers to refuse members of the public from purchasing fuel. After two days of discussion it was decided that only the proprietor of the filling station had the right to refuse to sell the fuel but that the local authority had to be present to check identification of people claiming to be ‘essential users’ and the Police to be present to protect the local authority representative as well as maintain law and order. By the time these discussions had reached agreement, the fuel shortages had been resolved (Cunningham, April 2001).

The Home Office (1998) defines the term “emergency” as:

*any event (happening with or without warning) causing/threatening death/injury, damage to property or the environment or disruption to the community, which because of the scale of its effect cannot be dealt with by the emergency services and local authorities as part of their day to day activities.*

This definition is commonly accepted by all organizations shown in Table 3.1.

The term “Emergency Management” is defined as *“all of those activities which seek to prepare for, and mitigate, the effects of any extraordinary incident upon the population or upon the environment”* (E.P.S., October 2001). This definition of Emergency

Management was suggested by the E.P.S. in its response to the Home Office discussion document “The Future of Emergency Planning in England and Wales” in August 2001.

The Society prepared this in the absence any nationally agreed definition to try and fill a perceived major gap in the Emergency Management service’s base. At the House of Commons Defence Committee meeting on 10 April 2002, the Right Hon David Crausby MP challenged the E.P.S.’s definition as being too wide (House Of Commons, 2002). In response the Society produced a more structured and detailed definition, in three parts as shown in Table 3.2.

<u>Explanation Of Emergency Planning Society Definition:</u>	
<u>Term:</u>	<u>Explanation:</u>
Activities	Includes risk assessment, research, problem solving, formulation of plans, consultation, the liaison process, the training programmes that support the plans and the operational activities once an emergency occurs and more.
Extraordinary incidents	Includes flooding, transport accidents, incidents at chemical and nuclear sites, crowd related disasters, outbreaks of human and animal disease, shortages of food, water, fuel and other essential commodities, the influx of foreign evacuees, acts of terrorism and more.
Effects	Includes death and injury, environmental pollution, sudden large scale homelessness, breakdown in communications, economic consequences for both government and the public, intense media scrutiny, the potential loss of faith in both central and local government, and more.
(Source: House Of Commons, 2002)	

Table 3.2.: Explanation of Emergency Planning Society Definition

The activities described in Table 3.2. can be categorized into four distinct areas which taken together make up the Emergency Management process. These areas are:

*“Planning, Training, Liaison, and Operations”* (E.P.S., 2000).

The outcomes of ‘Planning’ include written documents and procedures usually in the form of Emergency Plans. Emergency Plans are either generic, site specific or consequence specific.

A generic Emergency Plan will detail how an organization will respond to an emergency regardless of its cause or location. The Plan will detail how the organization will activate its alerting system, the personnel and departments responsible for the various aspects of work within the particular emergency areas of work including 24 hour contact details. These plans, such as County Council Emergency Plans or Police Authority Emergency Plans, are sometimes known as ‘catch-all’ plans. For example, Cunningham (1998) argues such plans will detail activation procedures that allow staff to put arrangements into action regardless of the cause or location of the emergency.

A site specific Emergency Plan will detail how an organization will respond to an emergency at a specific site. These plans contain the same type of information as the generic plans but the procedures are geared towards responding to an incident at a specific location and will include very detailed information about the local environment, topography, alternative access routes, site hazards or seasonal events which occur in the locality. Examples of such plans may include multi-agency agreed Site Plans for incidents occurring at say a nuclear installation, airport, chemical plant, petrol filling station or on a coastline. Many local authorities have produced Emergency Plans detailing how they would respond to an oil spill affecting their coastline (Cunningham, 1998).

A consequence specific Emergency Plan will detail how an organisation will respond to an incident that, regardless of the cause or location, has a specific effect. One example is a Council Evacuation Reception Management Plan. Such a plan would be activated

anywhere in a Council area in response to the evacuation of large numbers of people, whether the cause of that evacuation was localized flooding, threat of explosion or toxic chemical plume. The plan would detail how the specific needs of evacuees, such as alternative accommodation, emergency feeding, first aid, access to information, reunion with other household members and care of pets would be met. Another example is a multi-agency agreed Media Information Plan, detailing how the needs of the Media are to be met during an emergency that warrants national or international news coverage, regardless of the location or the cause of the emergency (County Durham and Darlington Emergency Planning Unit, 2000). Such plans would include details of Media Briefing Centres, Schedule of Briefings, installation of additional telephone lines, pooling of media resources, press identification and security measures.

The outcomes of ‘Training’ include training programmes aimed at ensuring personnel named in Emergency Plans have a theoretical and practical knowledge of their operational roles and responsibilities as described in the associated Plans. A typical training requirement for a local authority is shown in Table 3.3.

Chart Showing Emergency Plan Training Requirements In Durham County Council

Target Audience	Type of Training	Awareness Raising Seminar	Tabletop Exercise	Live Exercises	Plan Tests	Information Leaflets	Induction Courses	Informal Newsletter
Elected Members		*			*	*	*	*
Chief Officers		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Key Officers		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Dept. Co-ordinators/Teams		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Emergency Support Staff		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
All Other Employees						*	*	*
All New Appointments						*	*	*
External Stakeholders		*				*		

## Note:

This chart refers to active participation only. It is also recommended that Elected Members attend Tabletop and Live exercises as observers only.

(Source: County Durham and Darlington Emergency Planning Unit, 2001)

Table 3.3.: Chart Showing Emergency Plan Training Requirements In Durham County Council



The outcomes of ‘Liaison’ include local formal and informal meeting frameworks where relationships with partner agencies (e.g. the emergency services) are defined in order to ensure more effective co-ordination of resources during the activation of Emergency Plans in response to an emergency. A typical example of a local formal emergency liaison framework is shown below in Figure 3.1.

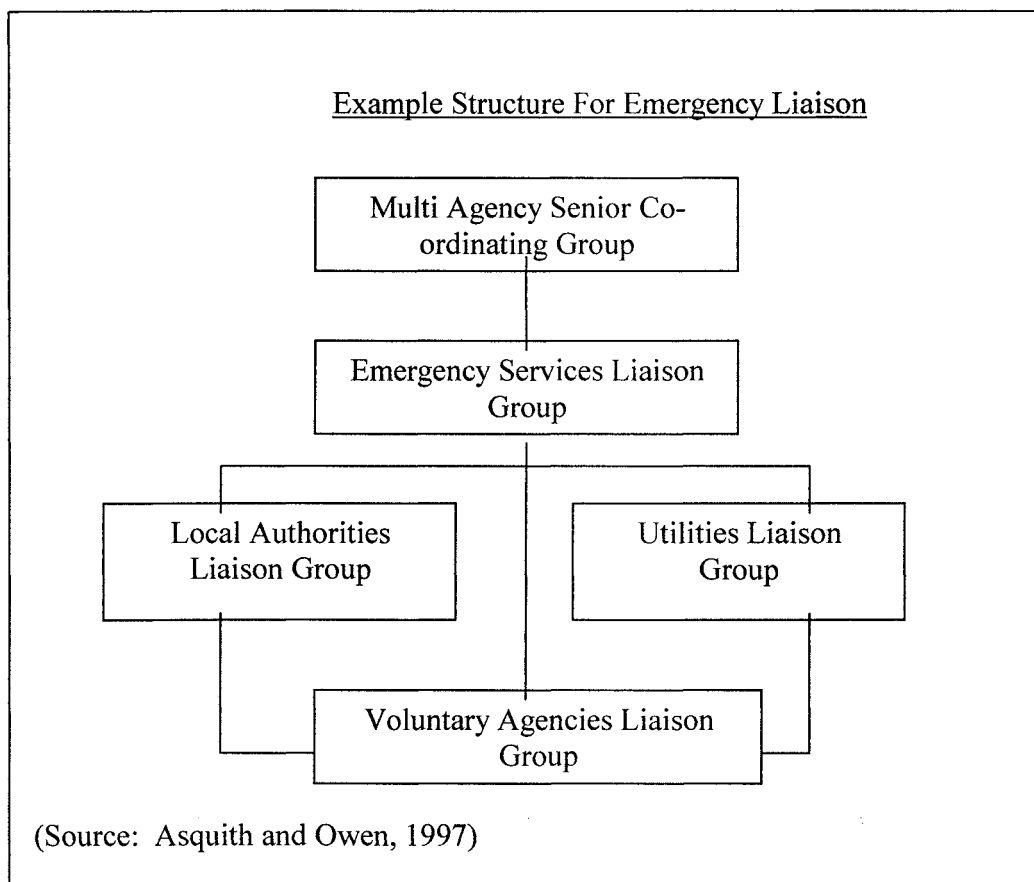


Figure 3.1.: Example Structure For Emergency Liaison

In Figure 3.1. above:

- the Voluntary Agencies Liaison Group will consist of emergency practitioner members of the voluntary agencies, e.g. British Red Cross, Women’s Royal Voluntary Service and the Samaritans;

- the Utilities Liaison Group will consist of senior representatives of the local utilities providers, i.e. electricity, gas, water and telecommunications;
- the Local Authorities Liaison Group would consist of a senior representative from each local authority in the area;
- the Emergency Services Group will comprise of operational representatives from each of the emergency services, i.e. Police, Fire, Ambulance, British Transport Police and Coastguard;
- the Multi-agency Senior Co-ordinating Group will consist of the Chief Executives or Chief Officers of each partner agency in the structure and will normally be chaired by the Chief Constable.

For integration purposes, a professional local authority Emergency Management Officer will administer each type of group, trying to ensure that issues of common interest and concern are made known between the groups.

The ‘Operational’ outcomes include the practical assistance given to the community such as providing emergency accommodation or feeding and the practical assistance given to partner agencies such as providing Emergency Control Centres or Temporary Mortuaries. Table 3.4. details some of the functions undertaken by the former Dumfries and Galloway Regional Council in the operational response to the Lockerbie Aircrash.

### Operational Activities By Local Authority During Lockerbie Aircrash

During the response to the Lockerbie aircrash the local authority performed numerous functions including:

- Opening up its Emergency Control Centre and running its response from there;
- Deploying staff to set up road blocks and diversions
- Organising emergency shelter, feeding, supplies of blankets and bedding (with assistance from voluntary organizations and the local supermarkets)
- Providing police with large scale OS maps of the area
- Diverting calls from the media and the public to the Emergency Control Centre away from the emergency services to relieve pressure on operational control rooms;
- Monitoring the adequacy of communication links and procuring additions where necessary
- Providing support to the search, recovery and investigation operations
- Establishing a helpline and advisory literature to own personnel regarding effects of stress and trauma
- Providing support to the bereaved via Social Services
- Providing support to the community via Community Liaison
- Organising a memorial service
- Administering a Disaster Appeal Fund
- Undertaking clean up, repairs, restoration and rebuilding

(Source: McIntosh, 1989)

Table 3.4.: Operational Activities By Local Authority During Lockerbie Aircrash

In the local authority environment, the Emergency Management service cuts across all departments, i.e. Emergency Management professionals provide the skills and knowledge

to produce plans and procedures whilst other local authority service departments provide actual resources and specialist skills for deployment during emergency response. For example, Social Services professionals provide trauma counselling and Housing professionals provide emergency accommodation in response to an emergency whilst local authority Emergency Management professionals provide advice on plan formulation and training in advance of an actual emergency.

### The Need for Emergency Management

There is an established belief that the first duty of any government is the protection of its citizens. In the U.K., Emergency Management has its roots in Civil Defence and in particular the part played by the Home Office between the two World Wars when the Air Raid Precautions service was set up. Following the war, the Home Office continued to take responsibility for Civil Defence which was focused increasingly on the perceived threat from the Soviet Union and its allies (Steed, 1998).

At the end of the Cold War the perceived need for Civil Defence reduced and former budgets were re-assessed and money was re-directed towards other types of services (Wheal, 2002). However, during the late 1980s there was a heightened awareness of the consequences of peacetime emergencies following a spate of unprecedented emergencies, some of which are shown in Table 3.5. (Appendix B contains further details of these emergencies and others which occurred during the 1980s).

Examples Of Emergencies Which Occurred During The 1980s:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Incident</u>	<u>No. of Fatalities</u>
11 May 1985	Bradford	Football stadium fire	56
22 August 1985	Manchester	Aeroplane fire	54
6 March 1987	Zeebrugge	Ferry sinks	193
8 November 1987	Enniskillen	Terrorist bomb	11
18 November 1987	Kings Cross	Underground fire	31
6 July 1988	Piper Alpha	Oil rig explosion	167
12 December 1988	Clapham	Train collision	36
21 December 1988	Lockerbie	Air crash	270
8 January 1989	Kegworth	Air crash	47
15 April 1989	Hillsborough	Overcrowded stadium	96
20 August 1989	Marchioness	Riverboat sinks	51

(Source: McLean and Johnes, 2000)

Table 3.5.: Example of Emergencies Which Occurred During The 1980s

Research published by the University of Bradford Disaster Prevention and Limitation Unit in 1988 demonstrated that, according to predictions, the U.K. faces between two and four emergencies every year each involving up to one hundred fatalities and that every three to four years there is likely to be a major incident which may kill up to one thousand people. This research argued that effective Emergency Management is a necessity, i.e. where an unavoidable catastrophe strikes there is a high probability that

approximately 25% of all casualties could be saved given effective pre-planning (Keller, 1988).

This debate surrounding Emergency Management continued into the early 1990s when Parker (April 1991) suggested ten principles of Emergency Management policy as shown in Table 3.6.

<u>Ten Principles Of Emergency Management Policy</u>	
1.	A need for unambiguous specified legal powers and duties within a unified statutory framework.
2.	A coherent organizational structure.
3.	Policies for dealing with disasters that overlap jurisdictional boundaries.
4.	Central government guidance and co-ordination.
5.	Adequate financial and human resources.
6.	A high degree of information exchange.
7.	Regular audit and inspection arrangements.
8.	Feedback on events including near misses.
9.	Appropriate research.
10.	Properly trained Emergency Planners.
(Source: Parker, April 1991)	

Table 3.6.: Ten Principles Of Emergency Management Policy

During the 1990s, major peacetime emergencies continued to occur within the U.K. including terrorist incidents in Manchester and London, the Dunblane school massacre, the B.S.E. crisis, the Sea Empress oil tanker grounding and the Southall rail crash (Appendix C contains further details of these emergencies and others which occurred

during the 1990s). Whilst many of these emergencies did reflect the earlier research by Bradford University, i.e. in terms of frequency and number of casualties, the fundamental basis of the Emergency Management service (in terms of funding and legislation) remained unchanged. In 1998, an independent review team established to consider the Easter Floods reported public sector response was based upon “*improvisation*” rather than the more desirable pre-planned arrangements. This team acknowledged that in light of public expenditure reductions and depleting stocks of equipment for dealing with such events, they were not surprised by their findings (Bye and Horner, 1998).

Towards the end of the 1990s, governments across the world became concerned that the Millennium Date Change period could potentially cause serious computer-related and national infrastructure problems of an emergency nature. For public services in the U.K., the focus of Emergency Management became more internal (i.e. within the local authority) as Business Continuity Plans for continuation of services in response to the Millennium Date Change became the priority compared with the previously hitherto external focus where assistance to the community was seen to have the greatest priority (Hick, 1999). This was a noticeable change in policy in that when central government perceived there to be a specific tangible threat (as opposed to planning for unseen disasters they believed might never happen), it adopted for the first time a high profile leadership position by instructing staff from its regional government offices to inspect the plans of local public agencies (Cabinet Office, 1999).

From 2000 onwards several high profile and widespread emergencies have occurred with the U.K. experiencing unprecedented levels of flooding, fuel shortages, the movement of refugees, transport accidents, foot and mouth outbreaks and the after-effects of the terrorist attacks in America on 11 September 2001 (including subsequent hoax anthrax attacks) (E.P.S., October 2001). Following the Autumn 2000 floods, the Deputy Prime Minister the Rt Hon John Prescott M.P. (2000) stated “*Government has an overall responsibility, at the end of the day, to provide for the safety and security of its people*”. The Deputy Prime Minister’s words clearly acknowledge the earlier discussed established belief that the first duty of any government is to protect its citizens. However, ten years after the publication of Parker’s work (shown earlier in Table 3.6.) and with all the emergencies that have occurred in-between, it is significant that Cunningham’s vision of the future of Emergency Management in Table 3.7. still mirrors many of Parker’s original principles, i.e. suggesting that nothing has improved since Parker’s comments in the early 1990s.



What Emergency Management Needs

“There are ten things that we need to do to put this (Emergency Management) right ...

1. statutory duty on all public agencies
2. emergency planning to be seen as a core activity of agencies
3. an adequate stream of funding
4. strong leadership from central government
5. wide area coordination
6. more community involvement
7. a national centre for excellence
8. national guidance
9. national standards
10. a national inspectorate”

(Source: Cunningham, May 2001)

Table 3.7.: What Emergency Management Needs

Both Parker (April 1991) and Cunningham (May 2001) believe a statutory duty for Emergency Management is necessary to ensure current ambiguity regarding responsibility for emergency response is removed and instead all public agencies have a clear understanding of their Emergency Management responsibilities. Similarly, both highlight the need for Emergency Management to be integrated into a local authority’s structure and to be performed as a core activity. Adequate funding is another requirement which both believe is necessary to achieve effective Emergency Management service delivery. Both consider stronger central government leadership (including national guidance and standards) and a national Inspectorate are key to achieving service improvement. Parker and Cunningham clearly state careful consideration must also be given to resolve the response to emergencies over-lapping jurisdictional boundaries (i.e.

wide-area emergencies). Finally, Parker called for “*a high degree of information exchange*” and “*feedback on events including near misses*”, whilst Cunningham suggested the development of a “*national centre for excellence*”, something which could fulfil Parker’s identified need. Such a centre has the potential to provide a single reference-source for Emergency Management practitioners trying to improve local plans by researching the lessons learned from recent emergency cases (E.P.S., October 2001, House Of Commons, 2002).

Despite a multitude of emergencies, the publication of disaster inquiry reports and the words of high profile politicians, the Emergency Management service is still carried out in response to these needs/demands despite what is perceived by many practitioners to be an inadequate organisational framework to support the service (Cabinet Office, February 2002).

### The Statutory Basis for Emergency Management

Whilst there is no one single specific statutory duty for Emergency Management, there is a raft of relevant core and supporting legislation currently in place.

The ‘Civil Defence Act 1948’ is the principal legislation from which current regulations are derived. ‘Civil Defence’ is defined in the Act as measures (other than actual combat) to defend against any hostile attack by foreign power. Civil Defence activities could, according to the Act, be performed before, during or after any such attack.

The 1948 Act is primarily a vehicle by which the ‘Designated Minister’ may take such steps as deemed necessary or expedient for Civil Defence purposes, including those contained in Table 3.8.

Ministerial Powers Under the Civil Defence Act 1948

- The organisation, formation, maintenance, equipment and training of Civil Defence forces and services.
- The organisation, equipment and training . . . of police forces, fire brigades and employees of local or police authorities.
- The instruction of members of the public in Civil Defence and their equipment for the purposes of Civil Defence.
- The provision, storage and maintenance of commodities and things required for Civil Defence.
- The provision, construction, maintenance . . . of premises, structures or excavations required for Civil Defence and the doing of any other work required for Civil Defence.

(Source: Vary, 2000)

Table 3.8.: Ministerial Powers Under the Civil Defence Act 1948

The Designated Minister may also define necessary regulations to pay grants (with the consent of the Treasury) towards the expenses of local authorities and police authorities and to make such amendments to the Act as necessary or expedient to take account of the passage of time or other changes.

Under the ‘Local Government Act 1972’, local authorities were given a statutory duty to make provision for the possibility of Britain being involved in nuclear or conventional war. Section 138 of the Act stated that in times of an emergency being imminent (where there was reasonable grounds for such an expectation) or an emergency having occurred (involving danger to life and/or property) English and Welsh County Councils, Districts and Metropolitan Councils have the power to spend whatever money is necessary to “*avert, alleviate or eradicate the effects, or potential effects*” of the situation. Local authorities were required to prepare specific plans for activities such as for feeding and designation of buildings, for use in time of war. The required plans were designated on an annual basis by the Home Office, to whom they had to be delivered by a due date. The Home Office who paid the grants to county level authorities to support this provision, required the completion of a detailed annual return and paid regular visits of inspection.

The purpose of the ‘Civil Defence (General Local Authority Functions) Regulations 1983’ was to require local authorities to make, and keep under review, Civil Defence plans, to provide and equip premises suitable for use as an Emergency Control Centre to arrange for training and exercising of appropriate numbers of staff and volunteers. The ‘Civil Defence (General Local Authority Functions) Regulations 1993’ revoked these regulations but not before the publication of the The ‘Civil Protection In Peacetime Act 1986’, which permitted local authorities to use Civil Defence resources to mitigate the effects of an emergency or disaster (unconnected with hostile attack), and to perform their Civil Defence planning functions so as to allow for the possible occurrence of such

an emergency or disaster. The 1986 Act did not, however, place any statutory duty upon local authorities to plan for peacetime disasters, instead making provision for this under Section 2 in order to strengthen the peacetime planning powers of local authorities by permitting local authorities to utilize resources provided for Civil Defence planning to meet the effects of peacetime emergencies unconnected with any form of hostile attack by foreign power. It should be noted that the phrase ‘Civil Defence resources’ refers to items intended for Civil Defence purposes, and is usually taken to mean only those paid for (or partly paid for) out of Civil Defence Grant. The 1986 Act was an attempt by the Government to strengthen the peacetime Emergency Management powers of local authorities by allowing councils to use their Civil Defence resources, provided for war, to meet the effects of peacetime emergencies. Many Emergency Management professionals argued that the effect of this Act was negligible because it failed to impose on local authorities a statutory duty to prepare plans, exercises and provide training to local authority officers. Rather than encouraging local authorities to plan an effective Emergency Management service and then to fund its delivery through a combination of grant and other finance, it invited local authorities to spend the grant on what they could afford and allow any gaps in the service to be left unfilled.

There is also a considerable amount of legislation which arguably cannot be met by organizations (such as the police and fire service) without some form of local authority Emergency Management involvement. Some of this legislation is identified in Table 3.9. For example, the ‘Rabies Control Order 1974’ requires the Police to arrest any person in possession of a dog illegally smuggled into the country but the Police require the

presence of a local authority Animal Health Inspector to assess whether or not a suspected illegally imported animal is indeed a threat to public safety.

Supporting Legislation:

- The Classification and Packaging Dangerous Substances 1984
- The Control of Pollution Act 1974
- The Control of Pollution (Special Waste) Regulations 1980
- The Control of Pollution (Radioactive Waste) Regulations 1984 The Control of Substances Hazardous To Health Regulations 1988
- The Consumer Protection Act 1987
- The Dangerous Substances (Conveyance by Road in Road Tankers and Tank Container) Regulations 1981
- The Disease of Animals Act 1950
- The Dumping At Sea Act 1974
- Emergencies Arising From Chemical and other Substances Washed Ashore 1968
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990
- The Food and Environment Protection Act 1985
- The Highways Act 1980
- The Housing Act 1985
- The Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations 1982
- The Pipelines Act 1962
- The Rabies Control Order 1974

Table 3.9.: Supporting Legislation

Despite the plethora of supporting legislation, there is no one single, bespoke law to compel local authorities or their partner agencies to undertake Emergency Management

activities. This lack of a specific statutory duty begs the question of whether a co-ordinated service is either needed or truly supported by central government and arguably leaves local authorities with an easy escape route for not providing a properly funded service. Cunningham (February 2003) argues that this applies in part to all local authorities as he “...*has yet to meet a member of the public satisfied with our response to flooding, foot and mouth, the fuel shortage etc.*”. A further example is Section 65 of the ‘Housing Act 1985’ places a duty on local authorities to provide shelter for persons homeless through no fault of their own, and this could be interpreted to include providing accommodation for evacuees or survivors following a disaster, however, there is no additional statute in place which is aimed primarily at ensuring local authorities have plans for such an eventuality. However, the Act does not contain any requirement on the local authority to provide any other welfare needs arising from sudden homelessness (e.g. emergency feeding).

Pressure from representative bodies such as the E.P.S. (the professional body for Emergency Management practitioners) and the L.G.A., coupled with rising public expectations of public agencies to respond to emergencies (Herbert, 2001), led to the Home Office issuing a discussion document in August 2001 entitled “The Future of Emergency Planning in England and Wales”. The results of the consultation showed that 94% of all respondents (from the public agencies consulted by the Home Office) are in favour of a new partnership duty for Emergency Management (Cabinet Office, February 2002). These results also found there was no support whatsoever from respondents for the ‘Civil Defence Act’ continuing as the legislative basis for local authority Emergency

Management services as it is perceived to no longer provide a true reflection of the work that is needed to be undertaken today to ensure the public are adequately protected from the impact of an emergency (Cabinet Office, February 2002). Following this consultation, the Cabinet Office have indicated that the Government will debate a new duty for Emergency Management when Parliamentary time allows (Cabinet Office, February 2002). The Government however, has not to date given any indication of the type of service which will be required under the Act, although the views of those consulted seem to call heavily for a robust, well-funded service which considers and consults with local communities and which is led by central government nationally and local government locally. Tom Brake, Liberal Democrat M.P. goes even further by calling upon the government to *“prioritise a civil contingencies bill for the next parliament and ... (consider) creating a national emergency planning agency, similar to F.E.M.A. in the U.S.A. or the E.M.A. in Australia”* (Wheal, 2002).

The advantages of new legislation potentially include the opportunity to underpin the importance of the service, the ability to clearly lay down responsibilities for public agencies, to provide a reason for the service to be properly funded, and to include sanctions and penalties against those public agencies that do not meet minimum standards. Any future legislation has the potential to also provide an impetus to change the culture of the U.K. from being arguably complacent about emergencies towards having a much higher level of awareness of the nature of emergencies. However, a possible downside of any new legislation could be the law might be too prescriptive and take away some of the ability of local agencies to plan for local problems in an



autonomous way. The implications of continuing without new legislation is therefore unlikely to mean there will be significant improvement in the Emergency Management service.

### The Structure of Emergency Management

The E.P.S. has spoken of an inadequate organizational Emergency Management framework within the U.K. as a whole (Ward, December 2000). The current organizational structure is complex but can be more easily understood if divided up between national arrangements, local arrangements (i.e. arrangements that exist within Police area boundaries) and regional arrangements (i.e. those arrangements for dealing with emergencies that cut across more than one Police area).

#### National Arrangements

National arrangements fall into two categories; first, the overall administration of the Emergency Management service and secondly the involvement of central government in responses to specific emergencies. The responsibility for the national administration of Emergency Management on a day to day basis belonged to the Home Office between the two World Wars and remained there principally until May 2001 when responsibility was passed to the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Vary, 2000). This move (which took place immediately after the general election) was seen within the Emergency Management profession as being of some significance, although there was no formal

explanation for the change. Previously, the Home Office had held responsibility for Police, Fire and Emergency Management. The Home Office retained responsibility for Police, whilst Emergency Management went to the Cabinet Office, and Fire responsibilities were transferred to the new Department of Local Government, Transport and the Regions (which also administers other non-Emergency Management local authority functions). The main perceived implication of this transfer was that the government seemed to be sending a clear message that Emergency Management did not belong to one public agency but to the country as a whole (Cunningham, July 2002). It is perhaps interesting and significant in that the function of Emergency Management is now divorced from its three main participant agencies in local authorities, Police and Fire. Instead, the service is now aligned to the Cabinet Office which also administers the regional government offices, arms of central government the E.P.S. has argued are well-placed to undertake a wide-area Emergency Management role (Cunningham, May 2001). However, no formal explanation has been given and the reasoning behind the move is open to speculation. Indeed, Wheal (2002) is of the opinion because Emergency Management had “*stagnated*” in the Home Office, it was moved in order to give “*the issue more prominence, enabling the Cabinet Office to bang heads together if ministers appeared recalcitrant*” and through the Permanent Secretary, enable “*a convenient link between the intelligence gathered by MI5 and MI6 and the Emergency Planners*”. However, the announcement of where Emergency Management resides in terms of its new central government location was made some two weeks after the fate of Police, Fire and other local authority functions became known, and this even points to an argument that administration of Emergency Management was either forgotten about or even not

wanted by any particular central government department (Ward, November 2001).

Administration of the service includes briefing Ministers, paying Civil Defence Grant to local authorities, monitoring the national Emergency Communications Network (E.C.N.) and producing national guidance. The change in ministerial responsibility at Whitehall was reported as being a direct consequence of the Prime Minister's concern that recent fuel shortages and outbreaks of foot and mouth disease had failed to be brought under control quickly enough, i.e. the administration was perceived not to work (Sylvester, 2001). This seems to underpin the argument that whilst government is struggling to get to grips with the correct status of the service, they are at least aware there is a need for some provision.

Initially the E.P.S. welcomed the administrative transfer from the Home Office to the Cabinet Office (Ward, November 2001), primarily because the shift moved Emergency Management nearer to the core of government (the Head of the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat reports directly to the Prime Minister). However, giving evidence at the Defence Committee in April 2002, the E.P.S. stated they had "*concerns that the Civil Contingencies Secretariat are not taking the subject seriously enough*" (House Of Commons, April 2002).

In terms of specific emergencies, central government has recognized there is a role for its own departments to play in the response to emergencies which have a national impact. This role is termed the 'Lead Government Department Concept' and it is the responsibility of the Cabinet Office to nominate "*in good time to respond to an*

*emergency*” an appropriate central government department to assume the lead role in responding to an emergency (Home Office, 1998). The choice of Lead Government Department is influenced by the nature of an emergency as shown in Appendix D, whilst the generic role played by the Lead Government Department is shown in Table 3.10.

<u>The Role Of The Lead Government Department:</u>	
A Lead Government Department is expected to be prepared to undertake some or all of the following tasks:	
a.	Co-ordinate the activities of central government departments in the response to a disaster, providing a framework within which individual departments can discharge their specific responsibilities. An important part of this work will be to ensure that the necessary links are established with the local response.
b.	Co-ordinate the collection of information on the disaster and its effects for the purposes of briefing ministers, informing parliament, providing information to the public and the media at national level.
c.	Act as the focal point for communications between the local Strategic Co-ordinating Group(s) and central government.
(Source: Home Office, 1998)	

Table 3.10: The Role Of The Lead Government Department

Whilst the concept of the Lead Government Department seems reasonable in theory, some local authorities have found it does not work in practice. For example, when Cunningham (March 2002) was informed many Monseratt refugees (several of whom were extremely ill) needed to be accommodated in his area, he required advice and guidance from central government. He contacted the Home Office who referred him to

the Cabinet Office as Lead Government Department. The Cabinet Office denied they were adopting the lead role and referred him to the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office also denied they were the Lead Government Department and referred him back to the Home Office. Cunningham states in his experience, the Lead Government Department concept does not work since no one department would accept 'lead' responsibility.

### Local And Wider Area Arrangements

In terms of responding to local emergencies the common practice is that in those cases affecting only one Police Force area (e.g. a large chemical spill), then the local emergency services will take the lead in any life-threatening phase of a response and hand the leadership over to the relevant local authorities for long-term restoration to normality.

It is not always clear when this hand-over phase should take place, neither is it clear which organization has responsibility to activate Emergency Plans. For example, what may be a major emergency for the Fire Service (e.g. a water shortage such as the one that affected parts of the North East of England in January 1996 (Northumbrian Water, 1996)), may have very little impact on the Police Service. At the same time, because the life threatening phase of such an event is relatively remote, then it is not clear whether the response should be led by the Fire Brigade, the water utility or the local authority. In this instance, the local Fire Service assumed the lead role because the Chief Fire Officer recognized the situation was being handled ineffectively. However, this did not occur

until the second day of the incident, which in turn led to many complaints from the public about a lack of management and co-ordination, legal problems, poor response times in terms of transporting water into the North East from other parts of the U.K., compensation claims and accusations the affected towns were deliberately cut off from water to protect nearby cities suffering from water shortages. Ultimately, there was a lasting public perception that, with the exception of the Fire Service, the various other public agencies were reluctant to take responsibility to mitigate the effects of this emergency.

In those Police Force areas where a Two Tier system of local government exists, there is also confusion as to where responsibilities lies between the County Council and Shire District authorities. Currently Shire District authorities receive no direct funding for Emergency Management and this leads to a perception amongst some Shire Districts they therefore do not have an Emergency Management role. However, there are many instances where Shire District authorities have had a significant role to play in the response to an emergency rather than the County Council. For example, during flooding problems, the Shire District will provide both short-term and long-term accommodation for evacuees, emergency feeding, salvage, environmental monitoring, additional refuse disposal, and provision of information. The County Council's input will mainly be in the form of providing trauma counselling and some short-term housing (County Durham and Darlington Emergency Planning Unit, September 2000). The results of the Cabinet Office consultation paper "The Future Of Emergency Planning In England and Wales" highlighted this issue stating *"there was strong support for Shire Districts being included*

*in the statutory duty because of their considerable involvement already in Emergency Planning and response” (Cabinet Office, February 2002). Consultation paper findings cite the following comment made by Colchester Borough Council: “All too often, reference made by government about local authority Emergency Planning provision is aimed at a Shire County Council, when in reality the actual front line service provision is made by the District Council” (Cabinet Office, February 2002).*

It is interesting to note here whilst no local authority has a legal duty to provide an Emergency Management service and whilst County Councils do receive some direct funding for the function but the Shire District Councils do not, both tiers of local government in County areas may find the Emergency Management function subject to Best Value Review.

Where emergencies are confined to a region of the country which is larger than a Police Force boundary, but for which there is no national impact (e.g. oil spill affecting several hundred miles of coastline), there is currently no guidance in place regarding which organization takes the lead.

In essence, most public agencies have a sound understanding of their own roles and responsibilities in an emergency. However, they may have unrealistic expectations of other organisation’s abilities, and this potentially leads to confusion during the response. In addition, where there is a gap in recognized responsibilities, most organisations are reluctant to fill that gap because they are concerned about upsetting other partners, the legal position of their actions if things go wrong, and they suffer from a lack of adequate

resources to be able to fulfil their own responsibilities without worrying about those which they don't recognize as being part of their remit. As with the example of the North East Water shortages, some gaps are presently only filled as a direct consequence of certain individuals using their initiative and taking appropriate action.

### The National Philosophy of Emergency Management

In common with their being no statutory duty on any public agency, there is also no clear current statement of a national philosophy towards Emergency Management. There is some national guidance in the form of two documents published by the Home Office “Dealing with Disaster” (Home Office, 1998) and the “National Standards of Emergency Planning for England and Wales” (Home Office, October 1999).

David Brook was appointed to the post of Civil Emergencies Adviser to the Home Secretary in November 1989. Mr Brook consulted widely among local authorities, and their associations and examined existing legislation and current practices in the County, District and Metropolitan local authorities. Table 3.11. presents his findings.



Findings Of Civil Emergencies Advisor:

- A considerable amount of local authority peacetime Emergency Planning took place under permissive powers, but its co-ordination was not guaranteed and the quality was variable, dependent on the individuals concerned and the degree of financial and other support provided by the local authority.
- [Emergency Planning] had to take second place to established duties in competition for resources and attention as the majority of those consulted were in favour of a statutory duty of local authorities to plan for peacetime emergencies.
- There was some lack of preparedness for civil emergencies which included a failure to define the local authority's role, a lack of co-ordination between local authorities, and between those authorities and the emergency services.
- Integration and co-operation in plan production between counties and districts varied widely.

(Source: Brook, 1991)

Table 3.11.: Findings Of Civil Emergencies Advisor

Brook (1991) believed there was much in common between planning for peacetime disasters and for Civil Defence, so much so that the Civil Defence objectives could be enhanced by planning for the more easily visualised peacetime disasters such as localized flooding and aircraft accidents. The commonality of skills and local authority resources suggested to him both might benefit from a joint approach with the beneficial outcome of considerable cost savings. He also recommended the Government should endorse the linkage between peacetime and wartime legislation, and work should begin on new comprehensive legislation setting out national arrangements for community protection in both peace and war. This would include a new duty on local authorities to plan, train and

exercise their response to peacetime emergencies and that the local authority's role in coping with peacetime disasters should be more clearly defined. He also believed the role was to support the emergency services in the initial stages of the disaster and to maintain or restore the normal facilities in their area as soon as possible, and that local authorities should have access to the emergency plans of all agencies involved in the handling of disasters, that they should undertake co-ordination of plans as necessary, and that central guidance should be available to all agencies involved in handling peacetime disasters. The Government's own appointed Civil Emergencies Advisor therefore concluded that Emergency Management should be a statutory duty, hence supporting the supposition made earlier in this chapter recognizing the need for Emergency Management.

Despite the debate about the need for an appropriate statutory duty for local authorities, the only outcome to materialise from this was the "Dealing with Disaster" guidance document. In the foreword to "Dealing with Disaster", the then Home Secretary the Rt Hon Jack Straw MP stated many organisations have a role to play in responding to an emergency and such a response can only be effective if organisations dovetail and exercise their own procedures (Home Office, 1998). This foreword enshrines an arguably intrinsic weakness within the entire document by implying it is indeed the responsibility of all agencies to plan for emergencies, but fails to identify central government's own leadership role in ensuring the Emergency Management function works across all levels of public service. Whilst the guidance states in simplistic terms what should happen in responding to an emergency, it fails to define the specific detail of

how this should happen and identify which agency should be responsible for specific actions or the ‘penalties’ that would be imposed upon agencies who fall short of these (non-statutory) ‘responsibilities’.

“Dealing With Disaster” classified disasters by their cause as shown in Table 3.12.

<u>Classification of Disasters:</u>	
<u>Cause:</u>	<u>Examples of disasters:</u>
Natural	Storms, floods, snow, landslides, forest fires
Social	Health epidemics, food poisoning, contamination of crops
Environmental	Air, water and land pollution or contamination
Technological	Industrial; fire, explosion, toxic or radioactive release etc Transport; air, sea, rail, road etc Leisure; sports, structural damage etc
Hostile acts	Terrorism, malicious act, cranks etc

(Source: Home Office, 1998)

Table 3.12.: Classification of Disaster

The author perceives that Table 3.12. gives the impression it is easy to classify disasters (emergencies) into categories and this in turn could result in the perception that such eventualities are somehow easily controlled. An additional problem is the guidance document does not then discuss any of these situations in detail, i.e. it arguably presents an over-simplification of a set of highly complex scenarios.

“Dealing With Disaster” introduced the concept of Integrated Emergency Management (I.E.M.). The philosophy of I.E.M. is that modern Emergency Management should be

carried out at a generic level for all emergencies and not for specific single emergencies such as Civil Defence. The other key features of I.E.M. were that plans must be flexible and tested, arrangements should be integrated into an emergency responding organisation's working structure, all departments activities should be integrated and co-ordinated with other external organizations (Home Office, 1998). The generality of such statements, whilst perhaps stating laudable aims, again increases the sense these are aims which should be easily achievable and that all emergency responding organizations should achieve them as a matter of course. Unfortunately organizations are not given any detailed guidance as to how these 'statements' can or should be achieved, perhaps suggesting this is a major gap in current Emergency Management service provision.

The second publication offering national guidance "Standards for Civil Protection in England and Wales", was published in October 1999 and asserts that "*all local authorities have, at their heart, the well-being of their residents ...*" and implies as such local authorities have accepted responsibility for ensuring effective Emergency Management arrangements are in place. It has been argued the document is inadequate as a standard-setting tool, because in attempting to define the standards to be achieved in Emergency Management, it has aimed at the lowest common denominator (Cunningham, March 2002). For example, it specifies such self-evident targets as the need for a callout system, rather than to quantify the required time it should take to mobilize staff to respond to emergencies outside of normal office hours. Appendix E contains full details of the national Standards.

Neither of these documents arguably attempts to define roles and responsibilities, so there is often an element of confusion within the responding services about whose duty or indeed whose job it is to carry out specific tasks. There is a general feeling the emergency services and local authorities currently undertake more work in the area of Emergency Management than they are legislated or funded to do but undertake this work because of the ever increasing litigious nature of today's society (Vary, 2000). A statutory duty on organizations would have the outcome of removing confusion allowing clarity of responsibility and purpose emerge therefore enabling them to set their priorities.

All emergency services and some local authorities have tried to bring some order to the process of Emergency Management by adopting a three-tier Command and Control System as shown in Table 3.13. The system was agreed between the main professional organizations attached to the three operational emergency services, namely the Association of Chief Police Officers (A.C.P.O.), the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association (C.A.C.F.O.A.), and the Ambulance Service Association (A.S.A.), published in their joint document "Principles of Command and Control". This represented an attempt by the emergency services to make sure the need for integration between themselves at least was recognized and proclaimed even if not achieved or practical. The principles have also been endorsed by the E.P.S.

### Three-tier Command and Control System

- “Operational” – immediate measures applied to the problem at the front line.
- “Tactical” – a management level which prioritises actions and resources for the operational level and has responsibility for the overall management of the incident.
- “Strategic” – a policy management level to support the tactical level, resolve conflicting resource demands and plan for the recovery.

(Source: Home Office, 1998)

Table 3.13.: Three-tier Command and Control System

The overall aim of Emergency Management has to be to provide the public with a value for money service which ensures all the needs of those people affected by emergencies are met in a quick and efficient manner. However, despite the best intentions of local agencies, it is perhaps not surprising that amongst the public there are some significant misconceptions in understanding how the process works and who should perform which role. Vary (2000) writes the public believe the government (from Prime Minister to local council) should provide for their safety. He believes the public incorrectly assume local authorities provide the majority of technical services, i.e. they are unaware of the extent to which local authority services have been contracted out. In addition, he feels their lack of understanding extends also to the military, i.e. many members of the public are of the opinion soldiers and machinery will always be available to assist them.

This lack of public understanding of the function arguably stems from the general low priority Emergency Management receives as a local authority service, with the

subsequent lack of publicity attached to a service often seen as an insurance policy Elected Members and Chief Officers hope they never have to call upon (E.P.S., October 2001).

The E.P.S. believes it is essential the public become more aware of Emergency Management arrangements. They argue communities and business organisations need to understand how they can help themselves in emergency situations. Statutory organisations need to work within the community to understand what they need and how this can best be achieved. Obviously, this will have financial implications, but it can be argued a more effective ability to respond to emergencies will in fact save money in the long term as damage, both physical and to economic reputation, will be mitigated more quickly (E.P.S., October 2001).

#### Funding of Emergency Management

Funding of Emergency Management in terms of identifiable funds steadily decreased through the 1990s (Steed, 1998). At central government level, there has been a significant loss of key posts. The Civil Emergencies Adviser to the Home Secretary was abolished and the role taken on by the permanent civil servants of the Home Office Emergency Planning Division. The Cabinet Office had a similar post but that too has been dis-established without any formal explanation from government (Vary, 2000).

At local government level, financial assistance in the form of Civil Defence Grant aid from central government has always been made available to local authorities as a contribution towards the cost of planning, training, exercising, shelter construction and other associated provisions. However, during the 1990s funding of Emergency Management became a major issue. Funding continued to be via Civil Defence Grant which is a specific grant issued by the Home Office, but is not part of the revenue support mechanism. The amount of national funding was distributed via a formula which was viewed by many as being complicated and unsatisfactory (E.P.S., October 2001). Whilst the exact composition of this formula was unclear consideration was given to the number of local authorities within a police force area and population.

The depreciation in the real value of the Civil Defence Grant to local authorities has been arguably exacerbated by Local Government Re-organisation. In April 1991, the Government published a consultation document, “Structure of Local Government” which claimed Single Tier local authorities would reduce costs and levels of bureaucracy whilst at the same time improving quality because they could align services more closely to the needs of the local community they serve compared with current Two Tier local authorities, thus making them more accountable and efficient (Jones, 1993). In anticipation of a number of new unitary authorities being created, the E.P.S. wrote a report “Local Authority Review In England – Guidance For The Future Delivery Of The Local Authority Emergency Planning Service” stating Emergency Management was a strategic service needing to be delivered on a wide area basis. The E.P.S. report claimed delivering local authority Emergency Management through Unitary authorities was



unlikely to be cost effective (due to the resources needed to perform the full remit of the service) and lead to a dissipation of effort (E.P.S., September 1994).

From 1 April 1996, thirteen English District Councils and several Shire County Councils were replaced by thirteen Unitary authorities, in Wales all eight County Councils and thirty seven District Councils were replaced by twenty two Unitary councils, and in Scotland nine Regional Councils and fifty three District Councils were replaced by thirty two Unitary authorities (Jones, 1993). The Government decided Metropolitan Districts/Boroughs and new Unitary authorities were to receive Civil Defence Grant from the same funding mechanism with no additional money being provided. This funding mechanism was arguably problematic since no historical data was available for judging the funding requirements of each of the new Unitary authorities. The increase in the number of authorities and the decrease in the total amount of grant has inevitably resulted in smaller grant allocations. This has had a staffing and equipment resource impact. For example in Northumberland, a County whose local authority administration remained unchanged following Local Government Re-organisation, the staffing of the Emergency Planning Unit of Northumberland County Council was reduced from eleven to seven members (Cunningham, March 2002). Many County Council Emergency Planning teams consisting of several staff were also split into smaller groups or single officer posts.

Towards the end of the 1990s, the L.G.A. began to voice the same concerns as the E.P.S.. They claimed over the previous 17 years, Civil Defence Grant had reduced in absolute terms from £22.4 million to £14 million whilst the number of authorities in England and

Wales eligible for grant had increased from 54 to 178. The L.G.A. (February 1999) expressed their concern that as a result some local authority Emergency Management services faced on-going financial difficulties.

This continuous reduction in the ‘real’ value of Civil Defence Grant in England and Wales and subsequently, its total abolishment in Scotland in March 2001, has significantly constrained the service provided by local authorities and has coincided with increased demands being placed on it. In the face of a further cut in funding, the Merseyside Fire and Civil Defence Authority instigated a legal challenge to the government in the form of a judicial review in the year 2000. The government decided against fighting the challenge and as a direct result grant awarded to local authorities rose from £14.9 million in 2000/2001 to £19.1 million in 2001/2002. This additional money allowed additional staff to be appointed and basic equipment to be purchased.

In a letter to the Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott in November 2000 the E.P.S.’s Chair Brian Ward expressed concern that whilst millions of pounds are spent responding to emergencies, the budget for pre-planning for such events is minimal. In addition, the E.P.S. wrote its membership had seen in recent years a “*succession of halfhearted and illogical (Emergency Management service) reviews*” none of which had resulted in any change other than a perceived loss of faith in central government’s attitude towards the service. The E.P.S. explicitly requested “*an immediate, fundamental and thorough review of Emergency Management in the U.K.*” (Ward, November 2000).

The Civil Defence Grant Bill received its second reading in the House of Commons in January 2002. The purpose of the Bill was to close the loophole in the ‘Civil Defence Grant Act 1948’ that had allowed Merseyside Fire and Civil Defence Authority the opportunity to mount its legal challenge. Introducing the Bill, the Parliamentary Secretary Christopher Leslie explained the purpose of the Bill was not to set the level of spending but to provide a mechanism for setting and distributing grants. He accepted the need to identify new ways of allocating sufficient resources, acknowledging local authority Emergency Management professionals provided an important service by working alongside the blue light services to minimize the effects of emergencies. In the subsequent debate, the Conservative MP Tim Collins echoed Leslie’s earlier support for the work of local authority Emergency Management professionals and called for all MPs to join in paying tribute to them (House Of Commons, January 2002). However, despite this apparent high-profile praise for Emergency Management professionals, Cunningham in March 2002 argued:

*We do not want to hear two hour debates in the House of commons which praise the efforts of Emergency Management professionals and which end in a vote to pass a bill, the sole purpose of which is to reduce funding to those same ‘wonderful’ Emergency Management professionals.*

Whilst funding in terms of Civil Defence Grant for 2001/02 was £19.1 million, figures released by the L.G.A. indicate local authorities in England alone “ ... *currently add discretionary expenditure of £9.9 million (from their SSA allocation) for planning for,*

*and response to, other types of emergency*” (L.G.A., February 2002). Hence indicating a ‘real’ shortfall in the government grant allocation.

In preparing evidence for the House of Commons Defence Committee of 10 April 2002, the L.G.A. wrote they perceived Emergency Management to be “*seriously underfunded*” and they submitted a bid for an extra £26.76 million revenue and £17.08 million capital for local authority Emergency Management in England alone based upon work undertaken during and since several recent emergencies (including millennium planning, flooding, fuel shortages, foot and mouth disease and 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks) (L.G.A., February 2002).

The Liberal Democrat shadow transport minister and chairman of the National Council for Civil Protection, Tom Brake, states there has been an “*alarming reduction of 40% in real terms in the Civil Defence Grant since 1990/91*” (Wheal, 2002). Wheal (2002) reports that £18.9 million of Civil Defence Grant would be available in 2002/03 for allocation to 179 eligible local authorities, indicating this was a further reduction in ‘real’ terms for the local authority Emergency Management provision.

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Hargreaves, February 2003) have acknowledged the E.P.S.’s and L.G.A.’s concerns the Emergency Management service is currently underfunded. However, they consider a case for additional funding from the Treasury cannot be forceable made until new Emergency Management legislation is in place clearly detailing the remit of a local authority’s role and responsibilities towards the

service. However, the author believes in the interim period until such legislation is enforced Emergency Management professionals may need to explore the feasibility of seeking additional income from elsewhere such as contributions from the local authority, or undertake external activities to generate income including producing plans for other organizations.

### Technological Resources

As well as funding to local authorities being steadily reduced so to have the national resources which had been built up in previous years. For example, under the ‘Civil Defence Act’ local authorities had been able to obtain funding to ensure they had a dedicated Emergency Control Centre which had robust communications facilities and was also protected from nuclear attack. Since the end of the Cold War, the Home Office refused to provide further funding to maintain these centres, and as such, many local authorities do not now have the facility to be able to manage the response to an emergency from their own premises. It was ironic that following the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001, the Home Office then issued “Guidance To Local Authorities In The Event Of A Chemical, Biological, Radiological Or Nuclear Incident” (Home Office, November 2001). In a report prepared by the E.P.S. in response to this guidance, the Society states the content of the guidance “... *raises serious concerns about which the Society would like further clarification. In particular ... we feel that the document does not contain sufficient details for local authorities to prepare effective plans*” (E.P.S., December 2001). This guidance included the recommendation

local authorities should have a standby Emergency Control Centre in case their initial Emergency Control Centre was rendered useless by a terrorist attack. The E.P.S. response to this stated *“this document urges local authorities to identify stand-by Emergency Centres, when the Cabinet Office has disqualified local authorities from claiming Civil Defence Grant to provide one Emergency Centre, let alone two”* (E.P.S., December 2001). In addition, Emergency Management professionals have expressed concern national communications arrangements, both in the way in which responding agencies are able to speak with each other, and in the way in which the public is warned of potential disaster, are currently inadequate.

Virtually every inquiry into every disaster that has occurred in the U.K. in the last twenty years has stated physical communications between the emergency services and other agencies has been problematic. Currently, the police, fire and ambulance services are not able to communicate with each other on their own emergency radios. This sometimes results in messages having to be relayed between two incident sites via two emergency services control rooms, causing unnecessary delay and heightening the possibility of miscommunication. Central government also continues to fund the Emergency Communications Network (E.C.N.), which is described as being a robust private wire network which will continue to enable local authorities and emergency services to communicate via telephone when normal landline telephones are lost. Over recent years, central government's claims the E.C.N. offers organizations responding to emergencies additional communications robustness have been challenged by Emergency Management professionals who claim there is no recorded incident when the ECN has been used to

help in the response to an emergency. Indeed, giving evidence at the Commons Defence Committee David Kerry, speaking on behalf of the L.G.A., said “*Our experience (of the E.C.N.) is it is rubbish, we do not want it, it is a waste of space and a waste of money, get rid of it and please spend the money on something more sensible*” (House Of Commons, April 2002).

The national reserve stocks of emergency equipment and provisions are arguably depleted (Cunningham, March 2002). The national system of warning sirens has been abandoned and replaced with a philosophy known as ‘Go In, Stay In, Tune In’ (National Steering Committee On Warning And The Public During Emergencies, 2000). The aim was to educate the population to rely on the broadcast media for warnings and advice. However, the related education programme (video training films for schools and workplaces) has lost its early momentum and promise and there is no nation-wide agreement about who should issue the tannoy warnings to get that initial message to the public. In addition, local authorities receive warnings of possible radiation contamination through the computerised Radioactive Incident Monitoring Network (R.I.M.N.E.T.) radiological monitoring system. However, many Emergency Management professionals consider this system to be inadequate and it arguably does not help local authorities to pass accurate information to the public. By the same token, local authorities receive severe weather warnings from the Meteorological Office and flood warnings from the Environment Agency but again the mechanism for quickly and accurately relaying this type of information to members of the public arguably leaves a lot to be desired (Vary, 2000).

The perceived lack of resources within the Emergency Management service can be directly attributed to the decline of Civil Defence Grant funding. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Hargreaves, February 2003) suggests funding cannot be set until appropriate legislation is enacted. In the meantime Emergency Management professionals may need to investigate alternative means of obtaining resources, e.g. instead of using in-house resources in future emergency response local authorities may consider making greater use of hiring, leasing and contracting out.

#### Summary of the Local Authority Emergency Management Service

It is useful at this point to summarise the current status of local authority Emergency Management services. The E.P.S. in advance of Best Value produced a S.W.O.T. analysis specifically outlined the current status of the local authority Emergency Management, as shown in Table 3.14. The purpose of such an analysis is to identify current strengths and weaknesses in order to then assess the responses or actions to any future changes to the local authorities (Johnson and Scholes, 1993).



<u>S.W.O.T. Analysis Of Local Authority Emergency Management Service:</u>	
Strengths:	Eclectic backgrounds of the Section's personnel; High levels of knowledge and experience; Good access links with council departments; Good access links with the emergency services and other agencies; Good access links with constituent and neighbouring local authorities; Proven track record in responding to emergency incidents.
Weaknesses:	Absence of specific legislation in support of the function; Progressive reductions in Home Office grant aid and other funding; Minimum staffing levels; Lack of visible profile for the function.
Opportunities:	Undertake a risk analysis to identify further threats; Use the Best Value Review to highlight the role and importance of the function; Undertake the 'business continuity' planning on behalf of Council Departments, other agencies and the private sector; Explore other means of generating additional income.
Threats:	Reduced funding; Being subsumed by other roles eg community safety; Threat to individual survival by acquisitive competitors.
(Source: E.P.S., October 2000)	

Table 3.14.: S.W.O.T. Analysis Of Local Authority Emergency Management Service

The issues highlighted in this S.W.O.T. analysis that may potentially impact upon the processes needed to undertake an Emergency Management Best Value Review will now be considered in the following sequence; the need for Emergency Management, its statutory basis, structure (nationally, locally and over a wider area), the national philosophy, funding and its technological resources.

The need for Emergency Management has been discussed throughout this chapter. When considering all arguments collectively, the overall finding appears to suggest whilst there

are no objections to an Emergency Management service being provided, there are very different views as to how the service should be provided. It is interesting to note that despite this overwhelming support for providing an Emergency Management service the E.P.S.'s S.W.O.T. analysis found that "*lack of visible profile of the function*" was perceived as being a major weakness of the service. This suggests the uncertainty regarding how the Emergency Management service should be provided is overshadowing the fact that a service is actually provided, and as a result, many people are unaware of its existence. This will undoubtedly impact upon the work of Emergency Management Best Value Review teams when challenging why and how they provide their service. Similarly, the current statutory basis of the Emergency Management service is also seen by the E.P.S. as being another area of weakness, i.e. "*absence of specific legislation in support of the function*". This indicates the Society believes the lack of specific legislation compromises the quality of existing Emergency Management services. This mirrors the concerns expressed by both Parker (April 1991) and Cunningham (May 2001) presented and discussed earlier in this chapter. The absence of specific legislation has the potential to hinder Best Value Review teams when deciding what should and should not constitute part of the Emergency Management service. In its analysis, the E.P.S. also gave consideration to the service's local and wider area structures. It is important to emphasise at this point that no specific reference is made in the Society's analysis to their perception of the national service structure. This suggests perhaps at the time of S.W.O.T. production, i.e. when the Emergency Management service was aligned to the Home Office, the E.P.S. were in agreement with Wheal's (2002) earlier discussed perception the service was simply "*stagnating*". However, several strengths were

identified within the analysis relating to the Emergency Management service's local structure, i.e. *"good access links with council departments"* and *"good access links with the emergency services and other agencies"*. These perceived strengths arguably reflect the importance of the earlier mentioned liaison activity of the Emergency Management service (E.P.S., 2000). The Society also consider that *"good access links with the emergency services and other agencies"* is yet another strength of the Emergency Management service. It is possible to argue this strength can relate to not just local structures but also those over a wider area. However, there is no specific reference in any part of the S.W.O.T. to wider area structures. This perhaps suggests there is general uncertainty as to how emergencies affecting a wide area would be managed. The issue of wider area structures will be explored in greater depth in Chapter Four. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, national structures are currently under Review and any announced changes must be considered by Best Value Review teams when looking to strengthen their existing Emergency Management local structures. Whilst no specific reference has been made in the analysis regarding the E.P.S.'s perception of the national philosophy over-riding the Emergency Management service, the analysis does cover all of the components that underpin the current philosophy, i.e. legislation, structure, funding and technological resources. Throughout this chapter, the views of the E.P.S. regarding the perceived limitations of national philosophy have been expressed. The issue of service funding has been discussed in the analysis. The Society considers progressive reductions in funding (principally Civil Defence Grant allocations) are a current weakness in the service's provision and consider that if this continues it will become a key threat in the service's future, possibly resulting in the service being subsumed elsewhere within the

local authorities. These concerns mirror those views expressed earlier by amongst others the L.G.A. (February 1999, February 2002) and opposition MPs (Wheal 2002). It is perhaps not surprising then the E.P.S. have cited “*explore other means of generating additional income*” as a potential opportunity for the Emergency Management service, i.e. if existing funding levels are reducing then the service should consider finding new sources of income. Emergency Management Best Value Review teams will not only need to explore potential new sources of funding but also seek to identify efficiency savings where appropriate. However, Review teams may also find that shortages in Emergency Management funding may dictate how the Review is conducted. For example, an Emergency Management service’s budget may restrict the number of options available for consulting with the public. The issue of resource availability is also similar. Resources are a vital component of any service. The E.P.S. perhaps unsurprisingly view the Emergency Management professionals (i.e. their membership) as being one of the key strengths of the service, citing their diverse backgrounds, knowledge levels and experience of responding to a variety of emergency scenarios. However, the E.P.S. also cite minimum staffing levels as being a perceived weakness of the service suggesting the Emergency Management service cannot hope to achieve its maximum potential without adequate staffing. Part of this ‘maximum potential’ is referred to by the Society in the opportunities component of its analysis, i.e. “*undertake a risk analysis to identify further threats*” and “*undertake the business continuity planning on behalf of Council Departments, other agencies and the private sector*”. However, reflecting the earlier concerns of Parker (April 1991), Cunningham (May 2001) and the L.G.A. (February

1999, February 2002) without additional resources is it possible for the service to undertake additional work and perform it effectively?

### Emergency Management and Best Value

It is against this backdrop of perceived uncertainty that Best Value must also be applied to the Emergency Management service. Table 2.6. in Chapter Two identified the eight stages involved in the Best Value process. Each local authority must undergo a corporate review (i.e. identify what it wants to achieve when considering its current performance and the aspirations of its local community) and from this determine its programme of fundamental performance reviews (i.e. a timetable showing when each local authority service will be tasked to undergo a Best Value Review). During both of these stages, Emergency Management is just one of a very large number of local authority services being considered by Chief Officers and Elected Members. The third stage of Best Value requires local authorities to devise corporate systems and frameworks to assist individual services performing the fourth stage of the process, i.e. conducting a Best Value Review. From this point, a local authority is able to set its own performance and efficiency targets which are then published in an authority wide Best Value Performance Plan. The final two stages of the process relate to audit and inspection, i.e. internal and external checks to ensure compliance with Best Value requirements. Best Value has been devised so as to be a challenge for local authorities and their services. The author believes for Emergency Management the main difficulties to achieving Best Value in the service will be to complete stages three and four of the process, i.e. devising frameworks to assist the

facilitation of Best Value and conducting an actual Best Value Review. The eight stages of the Best Value process are similar to previous regimes within local government in that review, targets, publishing of results and inspection have always played a part, C.C.T. included. What will be different for local authority departments, Emergency Management included, will be the substance of the Best Value Review and the corresponding frameworks and systems which underpin it. Early research from Cardiff and Warwick Business Schools, have raised issues regarding not only Best Value outcomes (results) but also the underlying process and its implementation. The remainder of this thesis will concentrate on the latter and will aim to measure perception of the Best Value Review process within Emergency Management.

## CHAPTER FOUR – REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Introduction:

An extensive literature review was undertaken in two areas, first that of Best Value, and secondly that of local authority Emergency Management. Best Value and change in local government have been well explored in literature. In addition, there is now a growing body of literature concerning Emergency Management which includes work by existing service practitioners. However, despite extensive searches using the internet, the Emergency Planning College library (the national documentation centre for all specialist books, journals, magazines and other publications on Emergency Management) and academic libraries, there is virtually no dedicated literature to be found regarding the application of Best Value to local authority Emergency Management. Indeed only one such document could be found, the E.P.S.'s "Guide to Best Value in Emergency Planning" (October 2000), and this was only published once this particular research was well underway. Whilst this does apply Best Value specifically to Emergency Management, it is by no means comprehensive, probably because when it was written there was very little working knowledge of Best Value and it was only ever intended to be an introductory overview of the process. This study is therefore unique in considering the two subjects of Best Value and local authority Emergency Management in unison.

This research aimed to explore whether Best Value was truly implementable in Emergency Management in a comprehensive and consistent fashion across the U.K.. The literature review highlighted whilst Best Value is an area of local government activity strongly endorsed and indeed driven by central government, Emergency Management is an area of

local government activity that is neglected and poorly supported by central government. The literature review found Best Value is the manifestation of successive government's attempts to rationalise local government and is central to the current modernisation agenda within local government. This review also discovered Best Value is well financed, supported by in-depth guidance and, most tellingly, is rigorously inspected. In contrast, central government's responsibility towards Emergency Management appeared to be very limited and the service's roots remained in the context of old-fashioned Civil Defence. It will be clearly argued later in this chapter that the provision of an Emergency Management service is not a legal requirement for local authorities and is perhaps inadequately funded through an antiquated financial mechanism established for out-dated circumstances. Central government have so far produced sparse, ambiguous guidance documents for Emergency Management and appear to take no interest in either monitoring the outcomes of the service or inspecting the levels of service the public receives. The literature suggested Best Value is very much about the public's involvement in, and accountability of, local authority services. However, the literature also implied Emergency Management is a service provided by local authorities to a public that is both unaware of it and who have no means or experience of assessing the quality of current service provision because central government have not provided the means by which the service can be assessed, e.g. performance indicators and guidance.

### The Modernisation of Local Government

In order to understand the rationale for Best Value it is important to understand the historical development of local government. Stoker (1988) stated the development and growth of local government was linked closely in the U.K. to the growth of industrialisation in the 1850s. Increased urbanisation, coupled with associated problems led to the development of a



range of single role organisations covering housing, health and welfare. In turn, this led to the ‘Local Government Act 1835’ and the development of elected local councils who had a number of powers and control/ownership of certain property, which is seen by many as the start of the local government system currently in operation. From the mid 1800s onwards various legislation gave additional or new responsibilities for public health, highways, housing, poor relief and education to institutions of local government. This was a piecemeal approach in answer to a succession of separate needs and demands. The period from 1945 onwards can be broken down into three key periods, as shown in Table 4.1.

<u>Key Periods In Local Government Since 1945</u>	
Period:	Key Factors:
1945-1955	The launch of the welfare state, of which local government was a prime vehicle.
1955-1975	Economic growth continued, so expansion and modernisation became key factors in local government. Local government acquired many new powers. There was substantial improvement in service quality which was reflected in increased public expenditure.
1975-mid 1980s	Period defined as “ <i>from constraint to instability</i> ”. Unemployment rose and inflation doubled. In 1976 the country borrowed money from the International Monetary Fund. One condition of the loan was to halt the growth in public spending. Cash limits on spending were introduced and this reversed a long-established term of growth.

(Source: Stoker, 1988)

Table 4.1.: Key Periods In Local Government Since 1945

Stoker (1988) believed that after being elected in 1979, central government attempted to control the finances and expenditure of local authorities by means of confrontational strategy and constant changes to the process of government. The period from the late 1970s to the mid-1990s saw the introduction by central government of single-purpose agencies (also referred to as ‘non-elected agencies’). He argued the introduction of such agencies was an attempt by central government to constrain local authority spending by re-allocating money to the appropriate single-purpose agency depending upon their priorities (Stoker, 1988). Examples of agencies include health authorities and public/private partnerships such as enterprise agencies. This effectively meant local authorities were no longer sole service providers or strategic organisations for their areas, i.e. these responsibilities were shared with other agencies. Stoker (1988) continued his argument by stating such agencies not only fragmented the system of local government but also increased the complexity of service delivery by creating scope for organisational conflict and tension that could only be overcome by tackling the issues of inter-agency working and co-ordination. Kavanagh (1997) believed elected governments wished to see the decline of local government by reducing its responsibilities and introducing the private sector as a key role player. Private sector participation came via a number of key government policies, including the sale of a series of state owned industries, the contracting out of service at local and national levels and the introduction of market testing within the public sector as a means of obtaining value for money and allowing the private sector to be able to compete for these services. One of the key government policies for seeking greater involvement from the private sector was the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (C.C.T.).

Prior to the introduction of C.C.T., local authorities did put work out to tender, albeit only when the appropriate skills to undertake the work could either not be found in-house or when

the in-house workforce did not have time to complete the work required. Corrigan et al (1999) believed this form of tendering was *“not, therefore, seen as a threat to the normal method of service delivery”*. However, since 1979 C.C.T. a different form of competitive tendering emerged within local authorities. C.C.T. came into force through several pieces of legislation which identified certain services previously provided exclusively by in-house local authority workers but under the legislation had to be put out to tender, as shown in Table 4.2. The local authority workforce had to compete against private bidders and if the local authority won the contract their ‘contract price’ became its budget and the service was provided as if it were an ‘arms-length’ organisation servicing the local authority, often referred to as a Direct Labour Organisation (D.L.O.). Similarly, if the work was contracted to an outside private company, the relevant part of the local authority workforce was disbanded (Fowler, 1997).

<u>Services Applicable To C.C.T.</u>	
<u>Legislation:</u>	<u>Services which were subjected to C.C.T.:</u>
‘Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980’	Construction, building maintenance and highways
‘Local Government Act 1988’	Building cleaning, ground maintenance, vehicle maintenance, school meals, other catering, refuse collection, street cleaning, plus sports and leisure management
‘Local Government Act 1992’	Extended C.C.T. to professional, financial and technical services. This Act enabled the Secretary of State to add other services at a later date

Table 4.2.: Services Applicable To C.C.T.

Walsh (1995) saw C.C.T. as being key to central government's attempts to change local government. First, C.C.T. brought greater involvement of the private sector in delivering services, secondly as a direct result of the greater involvement of the private sector, the power of a local authority was reduced as they became an agency purchaser of the service rather than the provider of the actual service. Finally, as a result of public services being provided by private sector providers, the public sector trade unions were weakened (Walsh, 1995). A substantial amount of work was won by the private sector through C.C.T., as shown in Table 4.3.

% Of UK Local Government Contracts Won By Private Sector:

- Building cleaning .....48.5%
- Refuse collection .....28.1%
- Street cleaning .....29.7%
- Vehicle maintenance .....21.8%
- Education and welfare catering ..... 9.4%
- Other catering .....24.7%
- Ground maintenance .....33.0%
- Sport and leisure management .....16.0%

(Source: Corrigan et al., 1999)

Table 4.3.: % of UK Local Government Contracts Won By Private Sector

A study by the U.K. Department of Environment found that 40 local authorities had achieved, as a result of implementing C.C.T., an average saving of 6.5% (Corrigan et al., 1999). Stewart and Stoker (1995) believed it was not the contracting out of work that resulted in the financial savings but rather the significant changes to internal operating procedures made as a result of C.C.T.. They believed these changes led to greater efficiency,

e.g. detailed service specifications and improved costings. Corrigan et al (1999) believed regardless of who won the final contract, i.e. external provider or D.L.O., competition had proved to be an effective tool for reducing the cost of providing services.

In contrast, Emergency Management was not a local authority service directly subjected to C.C.T. (E.P.S., October 2000). However, Emergency Management was impacted indirectly by C.C.T. as a great many other local authority services, that would perform some role in the overall response to an individual emergency, were contracted out without specific reference to emergency needs (Steed, 1998).

There have been many arguments for and against C.C.T.. Bennett and Cirell critically evaluated the C.C.T. process and highlighted a mix of negative (January 2000) and positive (December 1999) aspects. The negative aspects of C.C.T. were perceived to be the bureaucracy, the costs associated with undertaking the process, the raising of expectations which in many instances could not be met, the removal of ownership for a service, the tendering process becoming the focus rather than the outcomes achieved, and finally the excessive power of central government to intervene (Bennett and Cirell, January 2000). However, the same critical evaluation did highlight several positive aspects of C.C.T. all of which it can be argued relate to the internal management of services, i.e. the importance of having proper procurement strategies, the need for service specifications, the importance of cost analysis, performance indicators and an audit process as well as the need for innovative thinking in service delivery (Bennett and Cirell, December 1999). However, Bennett and Cirell's (January 2000) major criticism of C.C.T. was that as a national policy, it was imposed upon all local authorities with no regard for local democracy and local issues. Jones (1997) took this argument a stage further when he stressed the danger of local authorities

supporting C.C.T. as this resulted in local authorities doing what they were told to do by central government without questioning and considering the implications upon their own locality. He did not believe it was possible for a nationally standardised and imposed policy to be successful and stated “*learning is likely to come more readily from diversity than from uniformity*”, i.e. it is only by local authorities having the flexibility and responsibility to adapt policies to reflect the needs of their locality that they can determine which approaches succeed and fail (Jones, 1997). To put these criticisms of C.C.T. into context, it is important to consider the changing social backdrop against which C.C.T. was operating.

As a direct result of the private sector being more involved in the delivery of public services, there was by the mid 1980s, a growing debate regarding the perceived differences between management in the private and public sectors (O'Donnovan, 1994). A debate was launched by Professor John Stewart, and subsequently promoted by the Local Government Training Board (L.G.M.B.), arguing local authorities should be more responsive to the needs of the public recognising they were customers and services should be provided for them and not at the convenience of the local authority (Stoker, 1988). At the same time, the public were no longer happy to merely accept what was offered to them, they wanted to be more informed and expected to have their views taken into consideration (O'Donnovan, 1994).

By the mid 1990s, the findings from numerous research studies indicated the public were unsure of the role of local authorities and were dissatisfied with how public services were delivered. For example, MORI (Page, October 1996) indicated the public had a lack of awareness of local government and its role, i.e.:

*The public see local authorities' role as largely that of a service provider – and nothing more. .... The low public awareness of local government means perceptions*

*of it are often based very heavily on old-fashioned and inaccurate stereotypes. For example, asked how local government could save money, the public frequently feel huge savings are available by cutting bureaucracy”.*

Corrigan (August 1998) argued the social and economic environment was constantly changing and that if local authorities did not respond to these changes they would find themselves removed even further from the public. While local authorities do provide services, they are, perhaps more importantly, political institutions representing their locality. The real challenge for local authorities was to ensure their roles as service provider and local political institution interacted (Leach et al., 1994). Fowler (1997) summarised this by stating *“(local authorities) need to learn to look at themselves from the outside – to see themselves from the perspective of the people and institutions they should serve or influence”*. The public expect to be consulted about, and have an input into, issues that impact upon them, they are no longer happy merely to accept what is offered to them (Corrigan et al., 1999). New ways of working were arguably needed in order to close the perceived gap between a local authority and its public.

Corrigan et al. (1999) argued that a continuing criticism of local authorities was their perceived obsession with bureaucracy and their lack of innovation in service delivery, i.e. *“there is too much rule-bound behaviour which is used to excuse a lack of managerial initiative and responsibility”*. However, it can be argued that C.C.T., because it was an enforced policy imposed upon all local authorities equally, did not provide local authorities with any flexibility to allow them to take into account the views of the public in their area thereby exacerbating the gap between a local authority and its public. Osborne and Gaebler (1999) considered local authorities could change to meet the needs of the public and they

identified ten principles authorities should follow in order to succeed, as outlined in Table 4.4.

<u>Ten Principles For Modern Government To Follow:</u>	
1.	Government should be catalytic: it needs to steer organisations rather than row.
2.	Government must be owned by the community: it needs to empower people and not serve them.
3.	Government should be competitive: it is vital that service delivery is injected with competition.
4.	Government should be driven by a mission: rule bound organisations need to be transformed.
5.	Government needs to be driven by results: it needs to be outcome-driven not input-driven.
6.	Government must be driven by the customer: it needs to service people rather than bureaucrats.
7.	Government must be enterprising: it must be concerned with earning money, not spending it.
8.	Government must anticipate problems: it must be concerned with prevention rather than cure.
9.	Government must be decentralised: structures must move from hierarchy to project and team work.
10.	Government must be oriented to markets: change can be leveraged through markets.
(Source: Osborne and Gaebler, 1999)	

Table 4.4.: Ten Principles For Modern Government To Follow

Whilst the principles outlined in Table 4.4. could ensure local authority services were more likely to be provided in-line with the publics' needs, it can also be argued many of these principles were unachievable due to C.C.T. constraints. For example, principle five states local government needed to be driven by results, however, Bennett and Cirell (December 1999) argued the tendering process itself became the focus rather than the outcomes achieved from C.C.T..



By the mid 1990s, the elected government were proposing to extend C.C.T. to white collar services. At the same time, the Labour Party in their 1995 “Renewing Democracy, Rebuilding Communities Policy” (Joyce, 1999) were arguing the only way to ensure continuously improving quality public sector services delivered at value for money was by involving local people in setting targets, achieving standards and monitoring costs. This arguably represented the beginning of Best Value.

### Best Value As A Legal Requirement Of Local Government

Following its election in 1997, the Labour Government began to develop Best Value to make it a legislative duty to replace C.C.T.. The initial reception to Best Value was mixed. For example, Page (1997) believed Best Value would help to restore the public’s faith in local authorities by ensuring their needs were met and central government intervention was minimised, while Krawiec (October 1998) was more cautious and believed Best Value could present *“local government with the most exciting opportunity it has ever had or could be utilised as the most centralising tool ever invented, converting local government into local administration”*, and Keady (September 1998) believed the public sector tradition of compliance, hierarchy and bureaucracy were not compatible with the *“upside-down kind of thinking”* required by Best Value. Regardless of the perceptions of Best Value, local authorities could no longer assume the most effective way of providing a service was to deliver it themselves, instead they had to consider a range of alternative service delivery options before selecting the most appropriate. In addition, a local authority could no longer simply maintain its existing status quo in delivering services but must strive to continuously improve all services (Corrigan et al., 1999). Waterstone, the Conservative local government spokesperson, argued against this believing Best Value had the potential to hinder local

authorities that already ran good services and implied a lack of central government trust in local government (Ellery, October 1999). Lord Bassam (August 1998) however, counteracted this argument by stating whilst the compulsion of C.C.T. has been removed, local authorities still have a legislative duty to ensure services are delivered efficiently, effectively and economically and there was a need to promote a mixed economy of provision to ensure year on year improvement. Filkin (June 1999) perceived whilst some changes in legislation could assist with Best Value, legislative change alone would not ensure Best Value was achieved as profound changes were also needed in local authority attitudes, performance and skills base. Best Value in its inception was arguably going to be one of the biggest challenges local authorities had to tackle in recent years.

#### Funding of Best Value

Whilst the majority of those involved in providing public services were relieved to find C.C.T. would be abolished, and indeed many were initially very supportive of Best Value, concerns were raised at an early stage regarding the funding and resource implications of its implementation. In 1999, Warwick University Business School's Local Government Centre, who had been monitoring the English Best Value pilot authorities, warned Best Value could not result in the rapid service improvements sought by the government without local authorities devoting additional resources to the process. Indeed many of the pilot authorities had found a greater than expected amount of time and staff resources had been needed to implement Best Value. Similarly, Jameson (April 2000) reported the Cardiff Business School, who were monitoring the Welsh pilot authorities, had found *“while efficiency savings may cut costs in the long-term, start-up costs and extra staff time needed are pushing up the price of Best Value”*. Calpin (July 2000) claimed *“local authorities face an average*

*bill of almost £250,000 to meet the start-up costs for the first year of the Best Value inspection regime*". His work allocated the bulk of the extra costs as being for training and running Best Value Reviews (49%), production of B.V.P.P.s (9%), consultation (17%) and work on performance indicators (9%). Shaw (June 2000) believed the cost of Best Value was escalating dramatically, quoting Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) figures showing *"the direct costs of Best Value could total £92 million in 2000-01. This compares with the estimate of £55 million for 2001-02 submitted by the L.G.A. to the comprehensive spending review in January"*<sup>1</sup>. Despite these costs, there was evidence that since its implementation, Best Value had resulted in some savings. For example, a report designed to meet Birmingham Metropolitan Borough Council's Best Value performance indicator requirements revealed losses of £18 million in its Housing Department. As a direct result of this, the council had explored the possibility of transferring its entire stock to a new social landlord (Rose, November 2000). However, Wandsworth London Borough Council has voiced their criticism of Best Value claiming *"the costs for auditors and inspectors checking internal procedures could rise to £250,000 each year with a similar amount spent on council officer time"* (Burton, March 2000). There had been specific concerns expressed by many small District Councils implementing Best Value. For example, South Hams District Council estimated in 1999/2000 they would have spent in the region of £150,000 implementing Best Value processes without taking into account *"the thousands of unpaid additional hours which many officers have invested in early service reviews ..."* (Smales, April 2000). Indeed, Ludlow M.P. Christopher Gill wanted local authorities with a population of less than 250,000 to be excluded from Best Value in order to save money (Rose, May 2001). To support his argument, he gave the example of Bridgnorth District Council which reported a Best Value saving of £85,000, but found their directly attributable

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<sup>1</sup> The Standard Spending Assessment (S.S.A.) reflected inspection and Best Value Performance Plan audit fees but did not account for direct costs including preparing performance plans, assembling performance indicator data, undertaking the Best Value Review process and consultation.

Best Value costs for the previous and current year as being £86,000 and £102,000. Nigel Waterson, the shadow local government minister concluded that *“money is being taken away from frontline services to pay for this audit regime”* (Williamson, April 2001) and Theresa May M.P. (Edwards, November 2001) claimed *“this bureaucratic inspection regime costs well over £200 million a year, but has failed to improve efficiency or provide better public services”*. Mike Grealy, the L.G.A. deputy local government finance director, considers *“this demonstrates that the investment in introducing Best Value is higher than originally estimated. The key thing is that ministers need to be patient about the delivering of savings. Clearly, the costs are up front but the savings are further down the line”* (Shaw, June 2000). While the Audit Commission (Burton, January 2000) stated local authorities could reduce their audit fees by *“developing effective performance plans, carrying out rigorous Best Value Reviews, undertaking a comprehensive follow-up and fully complying with guidance and legislation”* Ferriday (March 2001) was of the opinion Best Value was a waste of time, skills and resources and called for it to be halted immediately in order to allow Officers and Members to fully concentrate upon serving the public. Heathcock (September 2000) took this argument a stage further by questioning whether local authorities had sufficient key officers to be able to both undertake Best Value Reviews while actually delivering vital services effectively. In addition he also questioned the costs in time and energy of undertaking such Reviews by asking *“would this hard-fought for cash, not be better deployed in ensuring quality delivery where it matters – at the front end?”*. The junior local government minister, Beverley Hughes, believed all *“councils must regard Best Value as an investment and enter into it in that spirit”* (Rose, May 2001). Indeed, in direct response to Heathcock’s claims Rawlington (September 2000), while openly acknowledging a key challenge of Best Value was to monitor the resources assigned to it, stated that *“to imply any effort expended on it (Best Value) is wasted ... is foolish”*. Rawlington considered it was not

possible to ensure continuous service improvement without first having some form of review process and if such a process was “*rather cumbersome*” then it was the responsibility of the local authority to refine it.

### Best Value Guidance

Throughout its inception, central government defined the principles of Best Value whilst leaving the implementation and action issues to local determination. However, central government did recognise that prior to royal ascent being obtained for the ‘Local Government Act 1999’ many local authorities would welcome some guidance and this was duly provided in the D.E.T.R.’s circular letter of April 1999. In this guidance, the government stated they would “*not seek to prescribe a uniform approach or product*”. This guidance explained if the proposed Best Value Management Framework was “*followed imaginatively and in the spirit with which it has been designed*” lasting service improvements would result. This guidance acknowledged service Reviews as being central to Best Value and advised local authorities ensured whatever approach they used they “*take a sufficiently long-term perspective ..., involve Elected Members ..., seek advice from outside the authority ..., draw upon those involved in delivering the service or services ..., (and) review existing commitments ...*”. Attached to the guidance in Annexe 3 were details of 22 publications offering further guidance on Best Value. These publications, ranging from consultation papers to reports and guides, were produced by numerous bodies ranging from D.E.T.R., C.I.P.F.A., the L.G.A., the L.G.M.B. and others. Additional D.E.T.R. guidance (December 1999) was published later that year to assist local authorities in meeting the requirements of Part 1 of the ‘Local Government Act 1999’. This guidance incorporated the experiences gleaned by Best Value pilot authorities. This guidance explained that:

*Section 3 of the 1999 Act requires Best Value authorities to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which they exercise their functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This is a broad remit, and one that provides local government with a considerable challenge and a major opportunity.*

Annex B of this guidance contained a list of a further 34 relevant guidance publications. Today, there is a plethora of guidance available to local authorities produced from a wide variety of sources including private consultants, local government bodies and the Audit Commission. Some guidance documents are generic whilst others are specific to certain local authority services. Whilst it is positive to see so many publications being produced and so much information being shared amongst those striving to improve local authority services, it is pertinent to consider how much credence is actually given to such documents. Kelly (November 2000) argued that despite the Audit Commission being instrumental in advising local authorities on their management and delivery of services through their various publications, *“there continues to be significant variations in the standard of services provided by different councils, which suggests that the Audit Commission’s advice is occasionally unheeded”*. This implied it is perhaps possible for local authorities to be overloaded with too much information and they are unable to differentiate between those documents which are important and those which are not. As a consequence the issue of clarity of guidance and process information in an Emergency Management setting is core to this research.

## Best Value Inspection

The concept of inspection was not new to local government. Indeed, there were a range of inspection bodies including the Audit Commission, OFSTED and the Social Services Inspectorate and there was virtually no corner of local authority activity that was not subject to some form of external assessment. It has been suggested central government distrust of local government is the reason for such a vast number of inspectorates. However, this was denied by local government minister, Hilary Armstrong, when she stated *“if the government had wanted to embark on the destruction of local government we would have had to do nothing at all. Public apathy and indifference would have done more to undermine local councils than anything the government could do”* (Burton, September 1998). Instead, it is suggested inspection has a key role to play in the modernisation programme, *“not just spurring (or forcing) public bodies to improve their delivery of services, but also providing a public confidence test in those services”* (Edwards, June 2000). To ensure local authorities complied with the legislative duty of Best Value, central government created a Best Value Inspectorate Service, as described in Chapter Two. Hilary Armstrong M.P. was keen to stress to local authorities prior to the introduction of Best Value that inspection was a process not to fear but one that should result in Inspectors’ providing constructive feedback to improve services (Calpin, December 1999). This was reiterated by Dr Wendy Thomson, head of the Best Value Inspection service when she stressed *“local authorities have nothing to fear from inspection and should use it as a positive tool for change”* (Carroll, September 2000). However, as the total cost of all local government inspections (both Best Value and others) for 2000/01 was estimated to be in the region of £600 million (Edwards, June 2000), the Director of Finance at Brent London Borough Council, Stephen Hughes, voiced his concern that his authority would pay more for inspection costs (i.e. £300,000) than it had set

aside for implementing the Best Value process (i.e. £200,000) (Jameson, May 2000). Many others were sceptical of the actual benefits of the inspection process. Coen (June 2000) argued whilst inspection was a way of improving performance it was not the best way. He believed inspection could highlight inefficiencies or good practice but it could not develop new ways of thinking nor result in innovative solutions to meet specific community or individual needs. Coen considered too many local government services were provided in order to meet the requirements of Inspectors rather than the needs and aspirations of the local community i.e. *“securing genuine service improvements demands exceptional creativity and innovation. ... It’s hard enough to encourage innovation in the public sector without the disincentive inspection represents”*. However, he believed there was a role for inspection within local government provided that it allowed *“the people delivering our services more freedom to be creative in meeting local needs”*. O’Brien offered another perspective of the inspection process. He believed if local authorities were actually making progress then they should have no objection to undergoing a *“thorough, independent analysis that measures the rate at which progress is being made”* and felt Inspectors played a part in assessing the extent to which *“improvement planning has begun to influence the quality of services on the ground”* (Edwards, June 2000). While the first round of Best Value inspections provided an *“encouraging picture”* with *“local authorities demonstrating ambition and innovation while providing quality services to their residents”* (Carroll, September 2000) the Best Value Inspection regime has not been without its critics. Prior to the ‘Local Government Act 1999’ being enacted, Sir Jeremy Beecham, chair of the L.G.A., voiced his concern that any Best Value Inspection regime *“must not develop into a complex bureaucracy or become obsessed with procedures rather than outcomes”* (Williamson, October 1999). Research by Martin found there was almost total acceptance of the role that inspection can play in public sector improvement but there was rising concern that the present system was *“too bureaucratic and*



*not sufficiently joined up*” (Guyoncourt September 2001). Even greater concern was expressed in a report produced by SoLACE that challenged the level of quality control within the Best Value Service Inspectorate including the allegation of inspectors lacking appropriate expertise in order to fulfil their role (Burton, May 2001). A SoLACE survey found many Chief Executives had perceived Best Value Inspectors as being “*arrogant and aggressive*” and their negative reports had left local authority staff “*angry and demoralised*” (Calpin, May 2001). Thomson rejected these criticisms of Inspectorate by claiming they had a responsibility to the public to highlight poor services (Burton, June 2001). Indeed, Sir Andrew Foster, controller of the Audit Commission, supported the importance of inspection when he stated “*the individual judgements of auditors and inspectors on the performance of local services should be clear and open to challenge by local providers*” (Calpin, May 2001). However, several local authorities have publicly rejected the findings of the Best Value Inspectorate. For example, Bromsgrove District Council lodged a formal complaint against the Inspectorate stating serious criticism of the manner in which their inspection had been conducted and expressed concern the Inspectorate went ahead and published its report even though an appeal had been lodged (Sherrington, May 2001). In Denbighshire, Best Value Inspectors blamed poor management for high and increasing arrears within the authority’s housing rents services. Elwyn Edwards, the leader of the authority, criticised the Inspectors for failing to listen to the authority’s views and accused the Inspectors of making “*headline grabbing remarks rather than positive recommendations to improve services*” (Calpin, May 2001). Thomson (April 2001) defended the existing Best Value inspection process by highlighting that in a survey undertaken by market researchers RSGB had found of the first twenty eight local authorities to experience a Best Value inspection a response rate of over 90% found that 77% felt their service would be ‘a little/a lot better’ as result of the inspection and that both front-line staff and service users were more positive about the

inspection experience than Chief Executives, Service Managers and Members. Thomson argued these findings complemented those of research undertaken by MORI, i.e. 79% of the public supported the principle of inspecting public authorities in order to ensure they deliver value for money services. Indeed, as a direct result of inspection the high quality of some local authorities has been recognised. For example, the Personnel Service at Northumberland County Council and the Spectrum Leisure Complex owned by Guildford Borough Council were both awarded three stars and a ‘will probably improve’ rating. Burton (March 2001) reported whilst there have been previous three-star ratings, none have been combined with high improvement ratings, indeed this was *“regarded as almost impossible to achieve”*. The Audit Commission believes many local authorities undertaking Best Value Reviews focus upon the process of Best Value and producing a folder of evidence for the Inspectors rather than the outcome of the actual Review, i.e. improvements to services (Burton, March 2001). A survey conducted by the L.G.A. found while there was a clear recognition of the importance of inspections (i.e. they can be a catalyst for change and help improve local accountability), 96% of authorities that participated in the survey felt inspections were demanding, resource intensive and queried whether they actually assisted in delivering better services to the local community (Calpin, April 2001). The L.G.A. also reported only 10% of survey responders felt there was effective co-ordination between the different inspection regimes and only 7% felt there was consistency in the approaches of the differing regimes. In response to debates regarding the inspection process the acting director of the Best Value Inspection Service, Paul Kirby, acknowledged the Inspectorate had learnt many lessons and promised that *“if our mission is about helping local government improve, just criticising is not enough. There is room for much more upstream work to see how inspections can help change”* (Calpin, July 2001). Kirby pledged to work with local authorities to *“design fewer and better inspections and to concentrate more on giving*

*support for service improvements*”. Despite the on-going debate about the value of inspections, and the on-going evolution of the Best Value Inspectorate and its work, it is apparent all sides have one factor in common – the desire to improve local authority services.

### Emergency Management As The Result Of Non-Modernisation Of Civil Defence

The remainder of this chapter will focus upon the literature associated with the development of local authority Emergency Management services and the subsequent application of Best Value to the service. This will show that in contrast to the modern approach encapsulated by Best Value, the literature review suggested the U.K.’s current approach to Emergency Management is based on an outdated legislative framework and funding arrangements set in the context of Civil Defence planning (Cabinet Office, October 2002). In addition there is a lack of service guidance, national standards, national inspection and public awareness activities taking place within local authority Emergency Management which suggests the service is viewed by central government as not really belonging in today’s modern society. The result of this attitude appears to be two-fold. First, many organisations and local authority departments merely pay “lip service” to the Emergency Management service and do not accept they have a role to perform (Ward, November 2000). Secondly, many believe there is no need for the service to attempt to change because without guidance, standards, inspection and public consultation (all of which are key components of Best Value) meaningful change cannot be achieved (Cunningham, March 2002).

### The Lack Of Legislation In Emergency Management

There is presently no statutory duty that expressly requires local authorities to undertake Emergency Management. Instead, there is a plethora of related legislation that skirts around the edges of the service rather than dealing with the problem in a modern robust way.

Under the ‘Civil Defence Act 1948’, a duty was placed upon local authorities to carry out certain functions for the purpose of Civil Defence which:

*Includes any measures not amounting to actual combat for affording defence against any form of hostile attack by a foreign power or for depriving any form of hostile attack by a foreign power of the whole or part of its effect, whether the measures are taken before, at or after the time of the attack.*

The following Acts all placed various duties on local authorities. Section 138 of the ‘Local Government Act 1972’ gave local authorities the powers to incur expenditure to avert, alleviate or eradicate the effects or potential effects of emergencies. The ‘Civil Defence (General Local Authority Functions) Regulations 1983’ required local authorities to make, and keep under review, Civil Defence Plans, to provide and equip premises suitable for use as an Emergency Control Centre, to arrange for training and exercising of appropriate numbers of staff and volunteers. The ‘Civil Protection In Peacetime Act 1986’ which allowed local authorities to plan to use and to use Civil Defence resources for dealing with disruptions in peacetime. Section 155 of the ‘Local Government and Housing Act 1989’ established a scheme of financial assistance to local authorities where an emergency or disaster occurs.

While each of these Acts has already been discussed in detail in Chapter Three, it is important to consider the impact of the ‘Civil Defence (General Local Authority Functions) Regulations 1993’. During the early 1990s, the end of the Cold War saw changes being made to the planning assumptions concerning the threat of hostile attack on the UK. The ‘Civil Defence (General Local Authority Functions) Regulations 1993’ revoked the earlier 1983 Act and coincided with the closing down of home defence warning systems and other Civil Defence facilities (Ward, November 2000). One argument adopted by the Home Office (1992) in its original “Dealing With Disaster” guidance document was that readiness to meet peacetime disruptions confers preparedness to meet disruptions occasioned by war. On top of these duties the 1993 Act gives local authorities a power for the promotion of well-being, as detailed in Table 4.5.

The Civil Defence (General Local Authority Functions) Regulations 1993

*"2. - (1) Every local authority are to have power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects-*

- (a) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area,*
- (b) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area, and*
- (c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.*

*(2) The power under subsection (1) may be exercised in relation to or for the benefit of-*

- (a) the whole or any part of a local authority's area, or*
- (b) all or any persons resident or present in a local authority's area.*

*(3) In determining whether or how to exercise the power under subsection (1), a local authority must have regard to their strategy under section 4.*

*(4) The power under subsection (1) includes power for a local authority to-*

- (a) incur expenditure,*
- (b) give financial assistance to any person,*
- (c) enter into arrangements or agreements with any person,*
- (d) co-operate with, or facilitate or co-ordinate the activities of, any person,*
- (e) exercise on behalf of any person any functions of that person, and*
- (f) provide staff, goods, services or accommodation to any person.*

*(5) The power under subsection (1) includes power for a local authority to do anything in relation to, or for the benefit of, any person or area situated outside their area if they consider that it is likely to achieve any one or more of the objects in that subsection."*

*"4. - (1) Every local authority must prepare a strategy (referred to in this section as a community strategy) for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom."*

Table 4.5.: The Civil Defence (General Local Authority Functions) Regulations 1993

Cunningham (March 2002) believed central government considered these broad permissive powers to engage in Emergency Management as being sufficient. However, he believed they did not ensure consistency of performance across authorities, they did not attract secure funding from central government, nor did they address the problem of wide area emergencies that cut across local authority boundaries, citing the recent examples of the foot and mouth

disease outbreaks, the fuel shortages and incoming Kosovan refugees. He continued that with no specific statutory duty, and reduced funding from central government, many local authorities have not devoted the necessary resources needed to ensure a robust generic Emergency Management service is provided. This is borne out by experience from the Emergency Management seminars for Local Authority Chief Executives run by the Emergency Planning College. Many delegates expressed the view that without a statutory duty, backed up by some form of inspection and auditing regime, the issue of Emergency Management falls behind, in terms of priority, those many activities undertaken by local authorities, for which there are such duties and regimes (Cabinet Office, October 2002). This argument appears to stand up because, given budget restraints, statutory duties, by definition, must take priority over non-statutory functions.

The literature review revealed central government talk often about the importance of Best Value and the importance of effective Emergency Management. However, whilst they assign high priority of the theoretical process of Best Value (which is not actually a product or outcome in itself), they appear to assign low priority to local authority Emergency Management (which has a range of very important outcomes). In the Cabinet Office's discussion document "The Future Of Emergency Planning In England And Wales", they argued strongly that local authorities should have a new duty of 'community leadership' in Emergency Management. However, at the same time as calling upon local authorities to take local leadership the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat appear reluctant to take on the responsibility of national leadership and continually refer to their own role as one of 'sponsorship'. Cunningham (March 2002) argued this implied a lack of ownership at central government level for this service.

Although there is no duty imposed on local authorities to engage in generic Emergency Management, there are a number of specific instances in which local authorities do have duties placed on them as discussed in Chapter Three. For example, the ‘Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999’, the ‘Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001’ and ‘The Safety At Sports Grounds Act 1975’, most of which were made under powers contained in the ‘Health And Safety At Work Act 1974’ and in response to European directives or initiatives. The author of this study considered that an understanding of the principles of local authority Emergency Management, and of the roles and responsibilities of other agencies that may be involved in responding to a major incident, is required when working towards these specific pieces of legislation.

Despite this perceived lack of statutory duty, the E.P.S. has expressed its concern to Ministers (Ward, November 2000) that whilst multi-agency and cross-functional co-operation within the Emergency Management community has been further consolidated in a wide number of areas in recent years, the lack of central co-ordination or leadership has led to dangerous inconsistencies in the ways in which different areas approach the same problems. In addition, the remit of the local authority Emergency Management service is expanding on a regular basis when considering the many ‘new’ or ‘never before experienced’ emergencies that have occurred both in the U.K. and throughout the world over the last five years. For example, in relation to health emergencies, drought, flooding, safety at sports grounds, airport terminal arrangements, rail safety and city centre evacuations. However, how these diverse areas of Emergency Management work are dealt with varies widely between local authorities, rendering any comparison of the service, one of the central tenets of Best Value, virtually impossible.



There are many other writers who have provided strong arguments for the provision of an Emergency Management service. Quarantelli (1991) argued modern societies are faced with more and worse disasters in the future as a direct result of changes in social trends, risks and vulnerabilities and therefore he believed it was imperative contingency arrangements were in place to deal with emergencies. Keller (1988) expressed effective Emergency Management was essential and where an unavoidable catastrophe strikes there was a high probability that approximately 25% of all casualties could be saved given effective pre-planning. It was interesting that despite the number and impact of, the emergencies that have occurred in the U.K. since the late 1980s successive governments have made no attempt to explicitly clarify and strengthen the legislative base of the Emergency Management service (Cabinet Office October 2002). Whilst some may argue this is perhaps because the perception of risk has been exaggerated, others may counter argue it is because central government are complacent.

Best Value forces local authorities to consider why they provide an Emergency Management service. Corrigan et al. (1999) believed the threat of waste was inevitable and that local authorities must review the resources assigned to a service in order to ensure they are addressing existing needs rather than past needs. As previously discussed the existing statutory basis for the Emergency Management service is set in the context of Civil Defence and is ambiguous. Whilst all could argue it is an inefficient waste of resources to perform Civil Defence planning, can a local authority justify providing a service for which they have no statutory duty? Is a sense of moral responsibility for providing an Emergency Management service sufficient? Indeed, such an argument could be made if there was a clear preference by the tax payer for it to do so. A challenge must consider the question 'what would be the impact if the Emergency Management service ceased: in whole or part?'. Since the late 1980s, the U.K. has experienced a steady spate of emergencies, all with

different causes and effects. The common theme running through most of these emergencies can be found in post-emergency inquiry reports that recommend contingency plans are in place. Therefore the planning aspect of the service cannot cease without leaving areas vulnerable to the impact of emergencies. Emergency response requires the active participation of a number of organisations which means contingency plans must provide a true reflection of the work to be undertaken by each organisation as well as detailing how those organisations will dovetail together (Home Office, 1998). The only way to achieve this, and to ensure once plans are produced they remain current, is through a process of on-going liaison (Home Office, 1998). It can be argued if the liaison aspect of the service ceased then the plans already in existence would quickly become out of date, no longer providing an accurate reflection of how a response should occur and this could result in even more confusion than if no plan existed at all. Whilst there has been a steady spate of emergencies in the U.K., it must also be recognised emergencies do not necessarily affect the entire country at once and that some geographical areas have had to cope with several emergencies while others have experienced only a minor number<sup>2</sup>. It is recognised regular training, which should include awareness raising, testing and exercising, offers an ideal way to ensure personnel identified as having a role in emergency response are as prepared as possible and will have a full understanding of what is expected of them during an emergency (Home Office, 1998). If the training aspect of the service ceased, it could be argued that through the liaison aspect of the service personnel with a role to play in emergency response would be aware of their role, however, they would not have any pre-emergency response knowledge as this can only be gained during participative training. Additionally, training provides an opportunity to test and exercise emergency plans in advance of an emergency occurring thereby helping to ensure plans are as robust as possible, without training the

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<sup>2</sup> This became apparent when conducting research at the Emergency Planning College where copies of local authority emergency response reports are stored.

robustness of contingency arrangements could not be guaranteed (Home Office, 1998).

Finally, as already discussed in this chapter it is not possible to stop the operations aspect of the Emergency Management service because the role of a local authority is to assist and support the local community it serves.

Anticipated future changes that could impact upon service delivery should also be considered during a Best Value Review. It was strongly believed the current national review of Emergency Management in England and Wales would result in new legislation (Ward November 2002). Some believed a statutory duty would automatically raise the profile and heighten the level of priority assigned to the Emergency Management service as well as improve the quality of the service. For example, the Disasters Working Party (1991) considered Emergency Management would assume a higher level of preparedness than is currently the case if an appropriate statutory duty was placed upon all local authorities. However, the current national review does not apply to Scotland and this raises the question of what faces Scottish local authority Emergency Management in the future?<sup>3</sup>.

The conclusion to be drawn from this aspect of the literature review is that the current legislative arrangements underpinning Emergency Management arrangements were designed for Cold War conditions, particularly the 'Civil Defence Act 1948' and the 'Civil Protection in Peacetime Act 1986', and this no longer provides an adequate framework for Emergency Management. Given the inconsistent ways in which the service is currently being provided, this review suggested new legislation was needed before local authorities could have a reasonable chance of providing a sustainable 'Best Value' Emergency Management service.

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<sup>3</sup> At the time of publication it remains unclear whether or not there will be a national review of Scottish Emergency Management services and arrangements.

### The Inadequate Funding Of Emergency Management

Chapter Three showed the level of Civil Defence Grant allocated by central government has declined over recent years and Llewelyn (1998) considered that as a result local authority Emergency Management services have been undermined. When local authorities were undertaking Civil Defence planning they held stocks of equipment appropriate to assist in any kind of response to a hostile attack. However, since the service's emphasis has switched towards peacetime planning it is virtually unheard of for a local authority to keep stocks of dedicated response equipment (Vary, 2000). Instead, they provide an operational response based upon sharing resources with other local authority departments and in some cases other organisations via a system of mutual aid. This is a concern shared by many. The Defence Select Committee report (July 2002) found the U.K. is ill prepared to deal with terrorist attacks such as those which occurred in the U.S.A. on 11 September 2001, citing lax security proceedings and key strategic sites being inadequately defended. In response to this report the L.G.A. estimated English local authorities need an Emergency Management grant of £63 million instead of the £18 million they currently receive (Edwards, July 2002).

As defined in Chapter Two, central government identified seven options for future service delivery which local authorities must consider when subjecting their Emergency Management service to a Best Value Review (IDeA and L.G.A., 1999). When applying each of the seven options to the Emergency Management service it is interesting to see how the number of realistic options are dramatically reduced. The first option, i.e. to 'pull-out' of providing the service and cease taking part in the activity, is arguably not a realistic option for local authorities. As recognised earlier in this chapter, and in Chapter Three, although there is no statutory duty for local authorities to provide this service it is, however,

automatically assumed that in the event of an emergency occurring the local authority will be involved in the response and take the lead role in the recovery phase of the response (Home Office, 1998) because of their responsibility for community leadership. The second option, i.e. the service is delivered in-house, is a possible option that all local authorities could consider, indeed many do already deliver the service using this approach (E.P.S, October 2000). However, local authorities must remember simply maintaining the existing status quo is not possible as the service must continuously improve as a result of the Best Value Review process (D.E.T.R., 1998). The third option, i.e. joint commissioning whereby two or more public service organisations agree to commission or provide the service together, is also another possible option local authorities could consider. The Audit Commission (1998) are very supportive of this type of approach to service delivery as they recognise:

*Local agencies – particularly councils – are increasingly concerned with complex problems, such as community safety or economic regeneration, which cross traditional organisational boundaries. A clearer recognition of the major concerns of communities and changes in national policy have given increasing prominence to these so-called ‘wicked issues’. These issues present some extremely tricky challenges that agencies cannot hope to tackle adequately unless they work together.*

It can be argued in view of the literature review the remaining four options, i.e. market testing, differing forms of externalisation and the transfer of the entire service to another organisation such a residents association, are very limited for a service such as Emergency Management where arguably no real ‘market place’ exists. The credibility and validity of opting for one of the final four options could surely be called into question when considering the limited number of other providers, the danger of creating the misconception the local authority’s responsibility for emergency response has been removed, the operational

implications of involving an even greater number of organisations in actual emergency response and ultimately the potential removal of ‘ownership’ for the service.

One of the principles of Best Value is to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in providing local authority services (D.E.T.R., 1998). Despite the extensive use of these three terms in relation to Best Value, and as discussed in Chapter Two earlier there are no clear definitions of ‘economy’, ‘efficiency’ and ‘effectiveness’ within the context of implementing Best Value within local authorities. This lack of clarity in the use of this terminology within this context may have the potential to cause confusion when undertaking Best Value Reviews.

As discussed in Chapter Two the Audit Commission (2000) described the ‘Three Es’ in a different way, i.e. ‘economy’ related to monetary input, ‘efficiency’ related to how monetary input is turned into outputs and ‘effectiveness’ related to how outputs produce outcomes. Watt (May 2001) brings both perspectives of the ‘Three Es’ together when he states “*Best Value requires an authority to look at the process of getting from inputs to outcomes and ask, ‘Could we do better?’*”. He believed the ‘Three Es’ were actually about identifying alternatives and ultimately selecting the most appropriate option. When applying Watt’s argument to Emergency Management many local authorities could argue economy is presently not being achieved because the current level of resources are not of the necessary quality, therefore it is not possible to procure higher level resources at less cost than the current level of resources procured. This argument has a knock on effect to the efficiency of the service, i.e. if the service inputs were improved then more output could be achieved which could ultimately lead to an outcome the local community would value. It could be argued that when applying the economist definitions to Best Value the process is actually

about seeking to achieve organisational effectiveness at least cost. However, the findings contained in this chapter clearly that with the local authority Emergency Management service, it is not possible to argue the current level of inputs are acceptable.

Although the curb on local authority expenditure began in the mid-1970s (Stoker 1988), there are many who believe local authority Emergency Management can only be improved through an increase in resources and budget allocations (Parker, April 1991, Vary, 2000, E.P.S., 2001, L.G.A., February 2002). However, Corrigan et al. (1999) argued that local authorities had for years believed services could automatically be improved via an increase in resources. Corrigan et al. felt local authorities must now seek more innovative ways of fulfilling current and new needs without expecting increased resources. They believed the effective use of competition could aid this process by ensuring finance is used well and additional resources can be gained through better co-operation and partnership working (Corrigan et al., 1999). Jones et al. (1995) agreed that true economy meant matching the level of local resources with the needs of the locality. Both central government and local authorities provide input into the Emergency Management service. Central government provide the main source of funding for local authorities via the Civil Defence Grant although many local authorities make a voluntary ‘top-up’ contribution towards the running of the service. The Home Secretary, speaking in the House of Commons in November 2001, stated *“Our objective (the government’s) is to do everything that can be done to enhance our resilience”* (House Of Commons, November 2001). Practitioners of Emergency Management were then very surprised when in January 2002 the ‘Civil Defence (Grant) Bill’ was passed through Parliament, the main effect of which was to restrict the level of specific Civil Defence Grant available to local authorities. It appeared local authorities must look outside of the central/local government arena in order to finance this service by establishing partnerships or applying competitive principles to determine who could provide the most

appropriate service. However, if the central government's stance of appearing to believe Emergency Management activities are vital, whilst at the same time as passing legislation to undermine it, then is it likely another organisation will assist or provide the funding?

### The Lack of Emergency Management Guidance

Central government have produced a best practice guide entitled "Dealing With Disaster" (Home Office, 1998) which strongly endorses the role local authorities should play in preparing for an emergency. For example, the guidance stated emergencies require "*a combined and co-ordinated response, linking the expertise and resources of the emergency services and the local authorities, supplemented as appropriate by other organisations*".

This indicated contradictory messages from central government, i.e. there is no need for a legislative duty for Emergency Management but local authorities are expected to take on board the issues in the guidance document and provide a peacetime service rather than a Civil Defence service. However, Llewelyn (1998) argued "Dealing With Disaster" was too limited in scope and did not have regard for innovation in thinking and practices.

Cunningham (March 2002) took this argument even further by calling for the withdrawal of "Dealing With Disaster" because it does not detail in exact terms the roles and responsibilities of each organisation which can lead to misinterpretation and a lack of acceptance of responsibility. Hoult (December 2002) voiced that central government departments do not subscribe to the tenet of I.E.M. as they do not share their emergency plans with local authorities. Lack of central direction has been apparent during two recent high profile, prolonged incidents – the fuel shortages in September 2000 and the foot and mouth disease outbreaks in 2001. During the fuel shortages Cunningham (April 2001) reported that:



*Local emergency plans had already been activated across the country, ... when, a few days into the crisis, a national 'high level plan' was imposed by government upon local agencies. ... but there were many flaws, both in the document's content and in the circumstances surrounding its introduction. The overall response at central government level was slow and unco-ordinated, suggesting that emergency plans were not already in existence.*

Similarly, in response to the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreaks Northumberland County Council (2002) held its own inquiry which reported that:

*The foot and mouth disease crisis in Northumberland did not have an effective system of overall management until the Disease Emergency Control Centre (D.E.C.C.) was set up ... five weeks after the first case was confirmed. If the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (M.A.F.F.) had accepted the investigation to take part in the Gold Command set up by the Police when the crisis started, or (alternatively) if M.A.F.F. had itself set up immediately a Command Centre close to the action in Northumberland, as recommended in the Duke of Northumberland's report of 1968, the management of the early stages of the crisis would have greatly improved. ... The formal systems for information, advice and guidance about the progress and handling of the outbreak were inadequate. ... This lack of communication from the primary source meant that the local authorities, and others who wished to meet the expectations of the general public, were in turn unable to do so efficiently.*

McLean and Johnes (2000) considered “*the British system (of Emergency Management) remains fragmented ... lacking in strong central direction*”. The effectiveness of local authority Emergency Management is arguably being undermined by a lack of central

government understanding and only once the Cabinet Office fully understands the Emergency Management service can it appreciate how important the service is (Cunningham, March 2002).

As well as challenging why a service is provided, the question ‘why is a service provided in the way that it is?’ must also be addressed. Whilst this literature review has criticised central government guidance it does acknowledge such guidance also stated Emergency Management arrangements “*should be integrated into an organisation’s everyday working structure*” (Home Office, 1998). This belief contingency planning should be incorporated into everyday working operations has been mirrored in several high profile post-emergency inquiry reports (Kletz, 1988). Indeed, Crainer (1993) when speaking about the capsizing of the Herald of Free Enterprise stated “*Disaster after disaster has revealed the same pattern of incompetence ... safety systems and procedures have not been updated to cover changes in technology and operating conditions*”. It appears that in the absence of a legislative duty and clear operating guidelines in many instances the local authority Emergency Management service is provided to suit local circumstances and reflect local politics rather than delivering the best possible service. For example, certain English Unitary authorities provide their own in-house Emergency Management service whilst others employ the services of ‘central’ Emergency Planning Units that used to deliver the Emergency Management service to the entire former Shire County Council area. In a similar vein, a local authority must consider what priority is assigned to its Emergency Management service. It can be argued Emergency Management is regarded as a lower priority when it is considered alongside daily impacting services such as Education and Social Services. Herefordshire Emergency Planning Unit stated recently “*to survive Emergency Management requires a much higher profile so that it can compete with other services for resources*” (Ayre, 1997). Indeed 25% of respondents who were asked to identify problems facing Emergency Management cited competing for

attention with high profile local authority services (Ayre, 1997). Norfolk Emergency Planning Unit believed “*Emergency Management is like insurance – you have to sell it. People do not want to know or they put it at the bottom of the in-tray*” (Ayre, 1997). In many instances the occurrence of an actual emergency has assisted in heightening the profile of the local authority’s Emergency Management service. For example, the occurrence of several localised flooding incidents in County Durham and Darlington over the last two years led senior emergency services officers and Elected Members to write to M.P.s and Ministers highlighting the problem and requesting additional resources being set aside to help deal with future problems (Herbert, 2001). Does this perhaps suggest funding is not being spent as efficiently as possible and that alternative ways of preparing for and responding to an emergency should be reconsidered? For example, D.E.F.R.A. claim up to two million homes and 185,000 businesses are at risk from flooding and have as a result embarked upon extensive flood defence work (BBC News On-line, September 2002). Insurers paid out more than £1 billion after the floods of Autumn 2000 and many are now indicating premiums could rise as a direct result (BBC News On-line, December 2002). Conservative M.P., Sir Spicer (2003) claimed central government’s spending on mass flood defence programmes was inefficient because it did not provide help where it was most needed. He believed it would be more efficient for government to provide small grants to residents whose properties are at risk of flooding to enable them to build their own defences and thereby make “*better use of taxpayers money*”. The review’s findings also suggested there is perhaps too great a reliance by local authorities upon taxpayer funding in order to provide an Emergency Management service indicating consideration should be given to identify supplementary or even alternative funding sources. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (R.N.L.I.), for example, as a registered charity provides 24 hour call-out to save lives at sea via its sea and rescue expertise. It is an R.N.L.I. decision to depend entirely upon

voluntary contributions and legacies for its income claiming there are “*overwhelming advantages of the voluntary system for the provision of an efficient and economical service*” citing independence from government as being a major factor (R.N.L.I., 2000). Whilst this approach to funding is obviously successful for the R.N.L.I., it is questionable whether the same approach could be considered for Emergency Management when acknowledging the undisputed need for local authorities to be involved in emergency response and assume the lead role in long-term recovery operations. Indeed could such an approach undermine existing resilience and local accountability?

As part of a Best Value Review, local authorities are required to compare their performance with those of others across a range of relevant indicators taking into consideration the views of service users (IDeA and L.G.A., 1999). A local authority must be able to answer questions such as ‘how does the service compare against national standards?’, ‘with whom should comparisons be made?’, ‘are there factors which may have distorted performance?’, ‘how does the service compare against user needs and requirements?’ and ‘what do comparisons say about performance?’ (Darlington Borough Council, 2000). An initial assessment of how well a service performs can be made by comparing it against appropriate national standards. “Standards For Civil Protection In England and Wales” were published by the Home Office in October 1999 and detail what is considered to be good practice within local authority Emergency Management services. For example, the policy/profile standard stated “*the authority should demonstrate a commitment to developing and maintaining effective Emergency Management arrangements*” and then goes on to list more specific examples of good practice stating “*ownership of the planning process is fundamental to the development of robust response arrangements. Ownership and commitment can be demonstrated by involving all relevant staff in the process and reinforced by the Chief*

*Executive and/or other relevant senior staff signing the frontispiece to the final document”*

(Home Office, 1999). However, these ‘standards’ are very general in nature and do not contain any performance indicators which effectively means no data is gathered by local authorities or by central government in order to make an assessment of how Emergency Management services are performing and how they compare with each other. It is currently very difficult to judge how efficiently local authority Emergency Management services are provided. Cunningham (March 2002) expressed the belief central government do not understand what Emergency Management actually is and they do not know what local authorities, particularly those receiving Civil Defence Grant, do in order to prepare for an emergency. This perceived lack of understanding on central government’s part as to the role of the local authority Emergency Management service is underlined by the fact no proper data is collected nationally. Despite the absence of national indicators, local authorities must still compare their service against those of others as part of a Best Value Review. Careful consideration must be given to whom comparisons should be made with. There are many different organisations involved in responding to an emergency including the emergency services, utilities, voluntary organisations and health authorities (Home Office, 1998). However, all of these different organisations play a different role during the pre-emergency and post-emergency phases, a factor that could influence performance data collected. Indeed the differing cultures and command structures within organisations can impact and distort performance data gathered (Audit Commission, 2000). For example, the emergency services are structured so they can provide an immediate response 24 hours a day, seven days a week to any kind of incident with lower level officers being first at the scene making an assessment as to whether the scale and impact of the situation warrants the involvement of more senior officers, i.e. a ‘bottom up’ approach. However, local authorities are not manned on a 24 hour basis seven days a week, and therefore, require time to respond to an

emergency situation and to bring in their senior officers who will lead their response i.e. a ‘top down’ approach. For these reasons, a local authority must decide whether it wants a ‘like-with-like’ comparison or comparison of itself with those who are leaders in a particular area of expertise. In addition, the absence of national indicators makes it impossible to identify who are the leaders in local authority Emergency Management delivery. To fill this void, many local authorities have set up benchmarking clubs with similar local authorities in order to compare their Emergency Management services. For example, all Welsh local authorities have taken part in a national benchmarking exercise while several English local authorities who provide an Emergency Management service to both Shire Counties as well as Unitary authorities have established a benchmarking club. Many Emergency Management benchmarking clubs are establishing their own performance indicators (Appendix F contains such a set of indicators). There is thus a vast duplication of work taking place resulting in a situation whereby only small ‘pockets’ of local authorities are able to compare against one another as opposed to all local authorities being able to compare against each. This mirrors Filkin’s (June 1999) expressed concern that substantial data collection and comparison at local level should be avoided, instead he believed comparison could be greatly enhanced by a central collection of data incorporating information about the private and voluntary sectors. The current lack of centrally collected data will continue to make it very difficult, if not impossible, for local authorities to state with any real conviction how competitively their Emergency Management service is being delivered.

The requirement to compare with others also brings into question a local authority’s existing performance management information recording systems because without unit cost data and budget allocations it becomes difficult to identify the most appropriate course of action to take (Corrigan et al., 1999). Local authority Emergency Management providers are further hampered in that for the last two years their budget allocation for the following year has not

been agreed by central government until a few days before the start of the financial year (Cunningham, July 2002). Similarly, Turner (October 2000) believed current arrangements for local authorities sharing information about emergency response are *ad hoc* and selective, often based upon individual officers networking contacts. He suggests instead this should be replaced by a controlled and structured national approach whereby information is shared and cross-referenced by service activity and profession so that all organisations involved in emergency response can have access. Whilst something as arguably as basic as performance data is not gathered, the important question then becomes ‘to what extent are lessons learnt following emergencies?’. Central government recommended all organisations involved in emergency response kept detailed records so when the response phase has passed appropriate follow-up actions could take place which included identifying lessons to be learnt and making them widely available to others (Home Office, 1998). Such an approach to collecting and disseminating information would arguably result in a more professional and visionary Emergency Management service able to combat Cunningham’s (March 2002) recent criticism that in his view very little had been learnt as a result of the terrorist attacks in America on 11 September 2001 or indeed the national fuel shortages in 2000, the foot and mouth outbreaks in 2001 and even the Lockerbie plane crash in 1988. Cunningham argued if the same events happened again local authorities would be no better equipped to deal with them. Llewelyn (1998) felt central government had a key role to perform in the collation and dissemination of lessons learnt, i.e. “*when the causes of disaster are examined and understood they can provide lessons for the future so as to avoid the tragedy of a repeat disaster*”. But why is it that despite central government recommendations being made are lessons then not learnt? McLean and Johnes (2000) are of the opinion that when emergencies occur, the public then want to have procedures put in place to ensure the situation will not occur again. They continue that in many instances post-emergency inquiry

recommendations, for a variety of reasons including cost and acceptance of responsibility, become lost in consultation and consideration periods. A good example of this is the inquiry report produced following the sinking of the Marchioness. A recommendation was made central government should conduct and publish an annual review detailing the progress made in implementing recommendations following all national emergencies (McLean and Johnes, 2000). This example is particularly interesting when considering such a central government annual review of progress was not implemented despite the then government's own Civil Emergencies Advisor acknowledging many lessons can be learnt from experiences and believed they should be disseminated to as wide an audience as possible in order to have more 'informed' contingency plans in place (Bawtree, 1996). This implies while central government do make some recommendations to the local authority Emergency Management community they are also generally uncertain as to how such recommendations, and even gaps which their own advisors identify, can be implemented. This again indicates a general uncertainty on central government's part about what the local authority Emergency Management service is actually about. Vary (2000) expressed the view if the Marchioness emergency occurred today the response would still be inadequate. He bases this upon the findings of a pre-millennium exercise undertaken by the London Riparian Boroughs and emergency services. However, when subsequently announcing the Marchioness Public Inquiry the Deputy Prime Minister stated the inquiry would *"bring some peace of mind to know that the full story can be told and that lessons can be learned for the future"*. Another example is provided by Llewelyn (1998) when he claimed that despite the public believing recommendations made as a result of public inquiries are implemented to improve practices, he in fact discovered two years after the Towyn Floods Report was published many of the mistakes made in Towyn were then repeated in subsequent flooding situations in Perth, Llandudno and Strathclyde. It would be misleading to give the impression no lessons are



learnt from emergencies. For example, Scanlon (1992) highlighted before the capsizing of the Herald of Free Enterprise no records were kept of who was on board or their location. However, since the capsizing this information is now seen as very important. The importance of local authorities having effective emergency plans for example was stressed by Hidden (1989) when he commended the emergency plan of the London Borough of Wandsworth in his report following the Clapham rail crash in December 1988. Whilst some lessons are learnt following emergencies, there is disparity between the views of central government and those who deliver the Emergency Management services as to the extent of the successfully incorporating lessons learnt from past emergencies into contingency arrangements for future emergencies. McLean and Johnes (2000) claimed simply addressing problems that cause emergencies is no longer sufficient; what is essential is a cultural shift from reactive to proactive or as Llewelyn (1998) described it “*using hindsight to inform foresight*”. Llewelyn (1998) argued even though many lessons are learnt by responding to emergencies these lessons are often either not well documented or are only shared at the responding officer’s discretion. In worst case scenarios, the knowledge gained following the response to an emergency leaves an organisation when a responding officer retires or moves away. Both the Cabinet Office Emergency Planning College and the E.P.S. try to disseminate such information via courses and seminars, reflecting Llewelyn’s (1998) belief exchanging information after an emergency ensures lessons to learn are identified and fed back into the planning cycle. Unfortunately, many courses are attended mainly by those people who are already convinced of the need for Emergency Management, rather than by those senior people in local authorities who have yet to be convinced of the need for the service (Cabinet Office, October 2002).

As discussed earlier, efforts must be made as part of a Best Value Review to identify alternative ways of providing an Emergency Management service. Currently Emergency Management is a service delivered locally in accordance with advice from central government that prime responsibility for handling disasters should be at a local level where appropriate resources and expertise are found, with the option of calling upon others such as central government departments and neighbouring local authorities to provide appropriate assistance as required (Home Office, 1998). But how credible is this advice when considering central government's apparent lack of understanding of the service? Is the locally delivered approach the most appropriate when it appears other services such as the Fire Brigade are heading towards regionalisation and proposals are being made to establish regional assemblies in England? Whilst the U.K. favours a local response, i.e. there is no national disaster plan or national response squad, the U.S.A. has F.E.M.A. an independent agency which reports direct to the President. F.E.M.A. is a 2,500 person agency with more than 5,000 standby reservists and is responsible for responding to, planning for, recovering from and mitigating disasters. Following the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, F.E.M.A. is now also responsible for ensuring the country's first responders are trained and equipped to deal with weapons of mass destruction. F.E.M.A.'s vision is of "*a nation prepared*" (F.E.M.A., 2002). In the U.K., there are certain critics who believe a local authority is not the most appropriate organisation to lead the Emergency Management service, particularly for wide area emergencies (House Of Commons, July 2002). Even the E.P.S., the majority of whose members are drawn from the local authorities, believed a common national framework and standard for Emergency Management can be achieved through an independent U.K. Emergency Management Agency (similar to F.E.M.A. in the U.S.A.). The Society considered that for this Agency to be as effective as possible it should be "*an arms length public agency*" sponsored and accountable to the Civil Contingencies

Secretariat and Cabinet Office in order to allow a degree of independence to perform its role whilst still ensuring transparency and accountability at as high a level as possible. They suggested such an Agency would have three prime functions. First, to provide expert advice at regional and local levels during major emergencies in order to support local authorities. Secondly, it would disseminate on a national basis guidance and best practice to local authorities. Finally, the Agency would also provide an audit/monitoring function ensuring new legislation was implemented that standards and performance indicators were being met and appropriate funding through the Standard Spending Assessment (S.S.A.) was being assigned to the service at a local level (E.P.S., October 2001). The London Emergency Planning Information Group (March 1990) also advocated the establishment of such an Agency which they believed should be independent of central government and have responsibility to research major accidents and disasters, as well as promoting the need for effective Emergency Management preparedness. Whether or not the local authority is best placed to deliver the Emergency Management service there is no doubt a local authority must be one of the key responders to an emergency, particularly when the life threatening phase has passed and the focus switches to long-term recovery. The key question therefore when applying Best Value to Emergency Management should be ‘can parts of the service be provided in a different way?’. Chapter Three clearly identified four components to the Emergency Management service, i.e. planning, liaison, training and operations (E.P.S., 2000). Local authorities must consider whether it is ‘Best Value’ to provide all four components of the service themselves or whether certain components such as training could be outsourced to another organisation(s) or supplemented by partnership volunteers. For example, the West Midlands Group of Local Authorities in March 2001 employed a consultant to formulate an emergency planning training strategy on their behalf. However, the London Emergency Planning Information Centre (March 1990) strongly argued the role

of the local authority in Emergency Management goes much further than responding to emergencies, restoration and recovery. They believed local authorities should provide all aspects of the Emergency Management service in order to be accountable to the communities they protect. Indeed, the E.P.S. Chair (Ward, November 2000) stated “*when emergencies occur, there is often confusion about which organization is in charge*” (as discussed earlier in Chapter Three when considering the ‘Lead Government Department’ concept) which suggested outsourcing the service or parts of the service would only lead to increased confusion and a further blurring of responsibilities.

#### The Lack Of Central Government Inspection Of Emergency Management

Whilst Best Value underlines the importance of inspection of a local authority’s service by independent auditors, and whilst the emergency services have their own national inspection agencies, there is no inspection of the Emergency Management service provided by local authorities. The E.P.S. (October 2001) argues “*regular auditing and inspection of the performance of all partners’ bodies must be undertaken*” and recommended this be done “*through a new Emergency Planning Inspectorate reporting to a new National Emergency Planning Agency.*”. This argument seemed to fall in-line with central government’s modernising agenda. However, there is no sign of a general Emergency Management inspection process being introduced or even being considered as part of the current national review of Emergency Management in England and Wales. Additionally, there is no guidance from central government of what approach a local authority should adopt when undertaking a Best Value Review of their Emergency Management service. Should for example, the service be reviewed as a stand-alone (service-specific) or as a cross-cutting issue? The evidence suggests Emergency Management is a cross-cutting service that can

potentially affect all aspects of public life. However, it is very difficult to inspect a service that has neither national guidance nor standards.

### The Lack Of Public Awareness Of The Emergency Management Service

Best Value requires local authorities to consult with local taxpayers, service users and the wider business community about all their services (D.E.T.R., 1998). Local authorities must identify their stakeholders, consider previous consultation undertaken, determine consultation objectives for Best Value, consider what resources they have available, how the consultation will take place and finally consider what they intend to do with results obtained from consultation exercises (Darlington Borough Council, 2000). Given all members of the public have the potential to experience the impact of an emergency it is paramount they are made aware of emergency response arrangements and have an input into the making of such arrangements. This is of greater importance since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S.A. and the heightened state of terrorist alert across the entire world. A vital part of a local authority's day-to-day Emergency Management service is to continually liaise with a very wide range of organisations such as the emergency services, the utilities, the voluntary sector and health authorities, all of whom have a key role to play in responding to an emergency (Home Office, 1998). The purpose of this liaison is to ensure all parties fully understand their roles, and the roles of others, in an emergency so that all plans and procedures dovetail and reflect current practice. All local authorities have contact with a wide range of emergency responding organisations, all of whom are 'stakeholders', and can use these contacts when undertaking the 'consultation' aspect of a Best Value Review. However, Best Value requires a local authority to consult with all service stakeholders including the public because public participation is seen as *"the key to (achieving) effective*

*modern local government*” (Calpin, October 1998). After consulting with other emergency responding organisations to gauge their views the Emergency Management service will be able to apply their own emergency responding expertise and professional judgement. Their responses therefore can be used as an indicator as to how the service can be improved. Can the same however be said about views expressed by the public? Lavalley (1994) claimed the public have four phases in their perception of risk. First, they do not believe an emergency will happen. Secondly, if an emergency does happen it will not affect them. Thirdly, if an emergency happens, and it affects them, the affects will not be too bad. Finally, if an emergency happens and it badly affects them there is nothing they can do about it. The issue of perception of risk, i.e. ‘actual risk’ versus ‘perceived risk’ is explored in more detail in Chapter Seven. However, the E.P.S. (October 2001) argue:

*The public should become more aware of Emergency Management arrangements.*

*Communities and business organisations need to understand how they can help themselves in emergency situations. Statutory organisations need to work within the community to understand what they need and how this can best be achieved.*

From these findings it is possible to argue that if the public are asked to give their opinion about an Emergency Management service and they do not have enough prior understanding then the value of their responses will surely be questionable.

There are many arguments for and against raising the public profile of local authority Emergency Management. For example, some practitioners believe raising the public’s expectations could lead them to believe emergencies are avoidable, something that is simply not possible (Turner, October 2000). This view mirrors the statement by Corrigan et al (1999) that many in local authorities are fearful of raising the public’s expectations of

services because there are never enough resources available to do everything the public requires. But the task for local authorities is to both raise the profile of the local authority Emergency Management service with the public and to consider ways in which the views of the public can be sought. There are many practitioners who believe a well informed public is a prepared public (London Emergency Planning Information Centre, March 1990).

Broughton (1998) argued for example the only way to find a solution to an Emergency Management problem that affects the community is to involve the community throughout the process of contingency planning in order to ensure they ultimately take ownership of the final procedures. Hennessey (1998) took this argument for consultation a stage further. He claimed that as a result of a local community being made aware of emergency procedures in advance of an actual emergency, they were much better prepared. During an emergency Hennessey believed an informed community makes a more compliant community and therefore a smoother response is achieved. He also believed following an emergency an informed community could assist more effectively with recovery and rehabilitation.

However, it is questionable whether such an approach is currently achievable in the UK.

Crainer (1993) believed this is not achievable in the U.K. until central government “*fully realise their responsibility when safety becomes a vote-winning issue*”. But can safety

become a vote-winning issue while the public remain unaware of the Emergency

Management service? A greater awareness on the part of the public towards the Emergency

Management service could not only ensure the public have an understanding of how an

emergency will be responded too but, more importantly, they are more likely to have an

accurate perception of risk. Whilst it is recognised emergencies can occur at any time, in any

place without any warning, it is perhaps surprising that awareness of the Emergency

Management service is not greater. Llewelyn (1998) recognised there has been a long

tradition in the U.K. to exclude the public from Emergency Management issues claiming

they were seen as “*an impediment or an obstacle*” in recovery. His research however claimed this was not the case in other societies, either underdeveloped or developed, and that Emergency Management professionals in this country are becoming increasingly aware of the role the public could play in an emergency. Indeed, in some U.K. emergencies, the public have actively become involved in emergency response and this must surely strengthen the argument that local communities should be involved in Emergency Management before, rather than after, the event. High profile emergencies where the local community were very much active in the response include the Lockerbie plane crash in 1988, the Towyn floods in 1990 and the Braer oil spill in 1993. The Dumfries and Galloway Regional Council quickly discovered following the Lockerbie plane crash on 21 December 1988 the agencies expected to be involved in an emergency response needed the assistance of the local community and that the local community expected to be involved and would have felt isolated and possibly resentful had they not been involved in the response (McIntosh, 1989). Following the Towyn floods on 26 February 1990 which resulted in one of the largest civilian evacuations in post-war Britain the local authority Chief Executive reported “*one of the significant lessons learned from the experiences of the floods ... (was) the need to develop self-help to assist in the community’s recovery*” (Clwyd County Council, 1993). The official report that followed the Braer oil spill (Cox et al., 1995) stated:

*In responding to any major peacetime emergency the primary emergency services are likely to be fully committed. In an isolated area such as Shetland there will inevitably be a delay in the arrival of reinforcements. It is essential, therefore, that local support be immediately available. Ideally, the whole community has to feel involved.*



Previous research undertaken suggested public awareness of local authority Emergency Management could improve the credibility of the service, fulfil the goal of public accountability, provide the public with evidence that planning goes on continually between emergencies, proves the local authority has a vital role to play in emergency response and also allows specific threats to be highlighted (Ayre, 1997). Indeed could greater public awareness and understanding result in their wanting to become members of emergency response voluntary organisations (such as W.R.V.S., British Red Cross and RAYNET) or support higher taxes to give additional funding to the service? The E.P.S. (October 2001) strongly favour enhanced public awareness, citing several advantages of greater public awareness:

*The advantages are:*

- *Create realistic expectations for the public – will allow them to know their roles and encourage taking responsibility.*
- *Greater community involvement in emergency planning arrangements.*
- *Give a clear and positive message to the public that Central Government are committed to emergency planning.*
- *Foster good relationships and understanding between statutory organisations and local communities.*
- *Enhance current relationships with voluntary organisations*
- *Create public support for emergency planning – which may lead to increase funding locally.*
- *Increased public knowledge, leading to the public being less likely to accept mistakes that should have been corrected because of a previous incident/emergency/disaster.*
- *Public better able to protect themselves – might turn to media*

- *Create sense of security within communities – caused by a better understanding on what each organisation can actually do.*
- *Clarify how limited resources within organisations could affect their ability to be able to meet public expectations.*
- *Clarify conflicts between perceived and actual risks.”*

It can also be argued if the public have an appreciation of the Emergency Management service they will be able to contribute in a meaningful way to a Best Value Review. Many local government academics believed local authorities must respond to rising public expectations and claim this could be achieved by genuinely involving service users and communities in decision making (Corrigan et al., 1999, Newman, October 2000). Jones and Stewart (1995) took this argument a stage further when they stated:

*Localness should be the basis of responsiveness in local government. Indeed, the great strength of local government is that it can provide democratic public control over bureaucracy in organisations far more effectively than can be achieved in large national bureaucracies headed by ministers or appointed boards.*

However, Page (1997) believed local authorities have much work still to do in this area in order to engage with their local community as most people do not really understand what services are provided by the local authority. Berry (May 2000) identified a consistent message for local authorities over the last decade is the need for good communications, and whilst some have viewed it as an optional extra it must now be regarded as being the cornerstone of an authority's reputation. However, the technical problems of conducting consultation and the resistance of some local government officers to involve the public in prioritising and marketing testing service delivery have been discussed by several writers

(Filkin, June 1999). Consultation is not an easy process to administer and in many cases the remit of, and concentration of, consultation is strongly influenced by the resources available and the necessary expertise being available within a local authority to conduct such an exercise (Cunningham, March 2002). In the post-emergency report of nearly every major emergency since the late 1980s, statements have been made about the importance of good communications during emergency response and it is argued by many this has never been achieved. For consultation to be useful it must be meaningful. In addition to asking service users for example what they want they must also be asked why they want it in order to identify any underlying needs or aspirations (Corrigan et al., 1999). To be meaningful clear objectives must be determined stating what a local authority intends to consult about, who they intend to consult and whether they require quantitative or qualitative data (Filkin, June 1999).

### Summary

It is useful at this point to summarise those factors identified and discussed throughout this chapter as having impacted upon the delivery of local authority Emergency Management provision. The author considered the most appropriate way to display such factors was via the use of a P.E.S.T. summary as it was a recognised tool for displaying the importance of political, economic, socio-cultural and technological influences. From this summary it was possible to identify perceived key influencers as well as any emerging trends and areas of potential long-term impact on the service (Johnson and Scholes, 1993). The findings of the literature review have been summarised in the P.E.S.T. summary in Table 4.6.

### Local Authority Emergency Management P.E.S.T. Analysis

Political:	<p>Legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best Value is a legislative duty applicable to all local authority services.</li> <li>• There is no statutory duty for Emergency Management.</li> <li>• The statutory basis for Emergency Management is set in the context of outdated Civil Defence planning (with a small number of exceptions for specific scenarios such as pipelines and C.O.M.A.H. sites).</li> </ul> <p>Guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a plethora of Best Value guidance information.</li> <li>• There is very little Emergency Management guidance information.</li> <li>• Lack of national definitions of ‘emergency’ and ‘emergency management’.</li> <li>• Considerable criticism of the ‘Dealing With Disaster’ guidance for not being specific.</li> <li>• Perceived lack of central government understanding of Emergency Management (including their apparent disregard of I.E.M.).</li> <li>• No guidance regarding how to conduct an Emergency Management Best Value Review.</li> </ul> <p>Performance Measurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No national performance indicators and poor performance management information recording systems.</li> <li>• Current quality standards heavily criticised for generic nature.</li> <li>• Robust and rigorous inspection service dedicated to Best Value.</li> <li>• No inspection or monitoring of Emergency Management services.</li> <li>• No national collection of data following actual emergency response.</li> <li>• Recommendations in post-emergency inquiry reports are not necessarily learned/actioned.</li> </ul> <p>Organisational/culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is inconsistency regarding working boundaries (especially difficulties with Two Tier authorities resulting in ‘grey’ areas).</li> <li>• Difficulties in dealing with wide-area emergencies.</li> <li>• Current national review of English and Welsh local authority Emergency Management provision (but not Scottish).</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differing cultures between emergency responders.</li> <li>• Local authorities dependent upon other organisations taking their responsibility seriously (even though its non-statutory) for emergency response to be effective.</li> <li>• Local authorities have community leadership role.</li> </ul>
Economic:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs of implementing Best Value and conducting a service review are higher than originally anticipated.</li> <li>• Inadequate funding for Emergency Management from central government (including a heavily criticised funding distribution mechanism).</li> <li>• Decreasing central government funding for Emergency Management resulting in perceived undermining effect on service.</li> <li>• Central government funding figures not announced in advance to enable forecasting.</li> <li>• Growing need for local authority financial contribution towards Emergency Management, however, service is a non-statutory duty and other statutory duties appear to take priority.</li> <li>• Consider need to identify alternative sources of funding.</li> <li>• Service is like an insurance policy, i.e. dealing with the unknown and have to 'sell' it.</li> <li>• Lack of 'real' Emergency Management market place thereby reducing options for future service delivery options.</li> </ul>
Socio-cultural:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best Value requires public needs to be identified and met.</li> <li>• The public support the inspection of local authority services.</li> <li>• Lack of public awareness and understanding of Emergency Management.</li> <li>• Society exposed to more risks and vulnerabilities due to changes in social trends hence local authorities from a moral rather than legal duty provide an Emergency Management service.</li> <li>• Public do not necessarily have accurate perception of risk, i.e. perceived risk versus actual risk.</li> <li>• Public assume lessons will be learnt and remedial actions put in place following actual emergencies.</li> <li>• Uncertainty regarding role of public in Emergency Management, e.g. an obstacle/impediment or a valuable asset in preparations and response?</li> </ul>
Technological:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of service experts.</li> <li>• Lack of national warning system.</li> <li>• No national database of emergencies.</li> <li>• Poor communications systems for use during emergency</li> </ul>

	<p>response, in particular the outdated national Emergency Communications Network (ECN).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No dedicated stocks of emergency response equipment hence need for mutual aid.</li> <li>• Emergency Management services provided to suit local circumstances and reflect local politics rather than delivering best possible practice.</li> </ul>	
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Table 4.6.: Local Authority Emergency Management P.E.S.T. Analysis

The summary in Table 4.6. highlighted the many potential influences that local authorities must consider and strive to overcome when subjecting their Emergency Management services to Best Value Reviews, i.e. it will be arguably difficult to achieve Best Value in Emergency Management when considering the need to apply a modern strand of central government thinking to a service that appears to be governed by outmoded legislation and anachronistic thinking. The remainder of the thesis will focus upon how local authorities can implement and facilitate comprehensive Emergency Management Best Value Reviews. The information contained in Table 4.6. is used as a checklist throughout the duration of this research to ensure that all identified influences were taken into consideration, particularly during census design and development of a prototype model specifically applying Best Value to Emergency Management.

## **CHAPTER FIVE – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD**

### Introduction:

The researchable question underpinning this thesis is ‘How effectively can a Best Value Review be undertaken within a local authority Emergency Management service?’. It is the intention of this study to produce findings to fill an existing knowledge gap upon which practitioners and academics could build and develop further, and in doing so, reflect Howard and Sharp’s definition (1992) of the process of academic research.

The research area for this study is local authority Emergency Management services within England, Scotland and Wales. Whilst it is recognised there are differences in English, Scottish and Welsh systems of local government, it was also accepted emergencies occur with no regard for local authority and political boundaries. For example, the Lockerbie plane crash in 1988 affected both Scottish and English local authorities (McIntosh, 1989). More recently, national fuel shortages and outbreaks of foot and mouth disease affected numerous mainland U.K. local authorities simultaneously (Cunningham, March 2002). A decision was made to exclude Northern Ireland from this research as it does not directly border England, Scotland or Wales and hence most emergencies on the mainland in recent times have had very little or no impact upon Northern Ireland. Furthermore, the Emergency Management provision in Northern

Ireland is delivered by a central government department and is not subjected to Best Value.

#### Research Philosophy and Strategy:

In order to undertake this research effectively, consideration had to be given to the merits and limitations of the two key research philosophies: the positivist and phenomenological philosophies in relation to the researchable question and its environment. From the outset, the foremost concern was to select the most appropriate philosophy to ensure the aim and objectives of this study were fulfilled in a rigorous way (Black, 2002).

A positivist research philosophy was used in the early stages of this study when the main objective was to gain a perception of the new system of Best Value being implemented within local authority Emergency Management provision within mainland U.K.. A literature review was undertaken explicitly looking at the implementation of Best Value within U.K. local authorities and implicitly considering the Emergency Management provision in order to identify the issues most likely to positively and negatively influence the implementation of Best Value in Emergency Management. This literature review provided a body of knowledge from which hypotheses were developed and an appropriate tool was designed to collect data from Emergency Management stakeholders. This data was analysed and conclusions drawn regarding their relevance and appropriateness to the provision of Emergency Management and perception of Best Value in relation to it. This philosophy and approach were particularly appropriate for



the early stages of this research for several reasons. A clearly identifiable target audience of Emergency Management stakeholders existed. Questions could be devised for these stakeholders in order to elicit their perceptions so as to uphold/reject certain beliefs (in terms of job function, location and type of local authority) held by stakeholders. These perceptions gave a general oversight of the areas of positivity, negativity and the key drivers relating to Best Value and its application to Emergency Management, although arguably not providing substantive understanding or interpretation of these outcomes.

However, this choice of philosophy did have certain limitations in relation to understanding the complex dynamics involved in delivering this local authority service. For example, national and local politics influence the provision of the service, the public has differing but potentially specific perceptions of risk, local authorities respond to emergencies in differing ways, different types of emergency have varying impacts. By adopting a phenomenological strategy, it would have been possible to ensure greater attention could be paid to those complex dynamics. The literature review identified many dynamic issues that appeared to influence the service, although none of these issues were in any way ranked particular order of importance. A phenomenological approach would allow focus to be directed specifically upon perceived dynamics in order to support or disprove their importance, and in doing so provide a detailed understanding of why these dynamics or outcomes prevail. Despite the acknowledged limitations of the positivist philosophy, it would not have been able to explore these dynamics without first gathering data to identify key aspects relating to perception and some of the factors associated to it from Emergency Management stakeholders regarding current and future service delivery

as well as the impact of Best Value in order to identify the key drivers upon which to focus.

A positivist philosophy was identified as being the more appropriate as it would provide an overall picture of the key perceptions and associations, i.e. by developing hypotheses from relevant literature, expressing such hypotheses in operational terms proposing relationships between specific variables, testing hypotheses, examining the outcome of hypotheses testing and considering theory in light of findings (Robson, 1993). This approach was considered essential in order to attempt to explain potential causal relationships between variables (Gill and Johnson, 1997). Appropriate data was collected and subsequently analysed in order to test hypotheses.

At the point in time when hypotheses testing had been undertaken Best Value had become a statutory duty for English and Welsh local authorities and a voluntary commitment for Scottish local authorities. To develop this research further in accordance with the earlier stated objectives and gain greater insight into how Best Value was actually being implemented within Emergency Management services, the author adopted a phenomenological strategy to complement the positivist philosophy proposed so far, and by doing so, implemented a multi-method approach for the whole of the research process (Saunders et al., 2000). This multi-method approach allowed the incorporation of case studies into the research to obtain detailed knowledge and understanding of the Emergency Management process from those few (at the time) stakeholders with first-hand experience of implementing Best Value within their service. This approach allowed

the data gathered at the start of the research to be triangulated to ensure the key results, perceptions and associations identified together with their interpretation were intuitive and reflected accurately the beliefs of the stakeholders. This supporting strategy also provided an insight into the complexity of the Emergency Management provision with respect to Best Value implementation and it also provided the opportunity to gain an insight into stakeholder perception regarding the development of a bespoke framework which was being proposed to act as a support model for the implementation of Best Value in Emergency Management. This multi-method approach was imperative in ensuring the various limitations of each type of philosophy and approach were avoided as much as possible, i.e. to cancel out what Saunders et al. (2000) have termed the “method effect” whereby different methods have different effects.

In summary, a four stage multi-method approach was adopted for this study to ensure every important issue in the evolving areas of Best Value and Emergency Management was explored and interpreted correctly:

- Stage One: A literature review.
- Stage Two: A census of Emergency Management Stakeholders, adopting the positivist philosophy to undertake initial exploratory research to identify stakeholder perceptions of the potential impact of Best Value being applied to their service.
- Stage Three: Development of a Support Model For Best Value Implementation. This was underpinned by investigating and interpreting the complex dynamics of implementing a Review within the provision, through a series of one-to-one

follow-up interviews with stakeholders who were able to provide relevant experience of implementation.

- Stage Four: Support Model: Final Evaluation. This was done using a research strategy similar to Stage Three's, where views of a professional group of Emergency Management Officers were sought to determine the value of a support model developed as part of this research to assist local authorities in ensuring the implementation of effective Best Value Reviews.

As a result of using a multi-method approach, the author is confident in the results presented later in this thesis given that key perceptions and drivers of stakeholders perception have been identified and detailed stakeholder perception have been added to the overall findings to reflect the complexity of Emergency Management and its process of review.

#### Practitioner-Researcher Focus:

As a practitioner-researcher, the author was keen to ensure personal experiences, particularly in the early stages of this research, could benefit but not unduly influence or bias the direction of this study. For this reason, it was essential the first stages of the research resulted in the measuring of perceptions of all service stakeholders thereby ensuring the foundations upon which the study was based were as representative as possible. During the remainder of the study, the author was able to take advantage of the

practitioner-researcher role, and in doing so, be able to use personal knowledge to help challenge and interpret the data collected.

Overall, the complementary combination of positivist and phenomenological philosophies along with the author's practitioner-researcher role ensured the specific objectives for this research were met in full. The remainder of this chapter will describe in greater depth the individual stages of this research study.

### Stage One: The Literature Review

As reflected in the distinctiveness of the research study and commented upon in Chapter Four, very little explicit literature had been produced regarding Best Value in Emergency Management. As a result of this, the literature reviewed came primarily from two distinct, but related strands, one being the development and implementation of Best Value in local government and the other being the background and role of the local authority Emergency Management service. When this research study commenced, Best Value was in its infancy and had not been introduced by central government as a statutory duty. However, as this research progressed, the volume of academic literature, guidance documents and professional journals published regarding Best Value increased. These publications included references to numerous on-going research projects looking at the application of, and results from, Best Value in a range of local government services. Additionally, there was a growing body of literature in the area of Emergency

Management including post-emergency reports, academic literature, guidance documents and professional journals and magazines.

The purpose of the literature review was to identify important variables previously defined by others as being key influences upon Emergency Management in order they could be considered and their relevance tested in this research (Sekaran, 2000) using a positivist approach. The literature review for this particular research continued throughout the duration of the study given that Best Value was a new and evolving process within local government being monitored by numerous bodies and organizations. Additionally, a number of English, Scottish and Welsh local authorities were required to respond to several types of emergency for which they had no experience, e.g. national fuel shortages (Cunningham, March 2002).

The literature review was supported in numerous ways throughout the study; by the author's position as a practitioner-researcher which provided up-to-date working knowledge of both local government and local authority Emergency Management (including operational response during a wide variety of actual emergencies), by attending a number of relevant seminars and conferences related to either Best Value or Emergency Management and by becoming involved in a number of Best Value Reviews of both an Emergency Management and non-Emergency Management nature by assuming different roles in each type of Review, i.e. Review Team Leader and Independent Officer. This research has also been further supported by the author's active

membership of the E.P.S. and membership of an Emergency Management benchmarking group.

The findings from the literature, presented and discussed in Chapter Four, confirmed little prior consideration had been given to specifically applying Best Value to Emergency Management. When combining the literature review findings and the author's experiences of the management of emergencies including fuel shortages, foot and mouth outbreaks and prolonged flooding, several important variables were identified for further investigation as part of this study, i.e. level of funding, legislative base, service monitoring, culture and public awareness. In-line with the positivist approach, following on from identifying the key variables, hypotheses were developed in order to test whether associations, either statistically significant or non-significant existed.

Funding appeared to be an important variable influencing how a service was delivered. The level of Civil Defence Grant funding payable to local authorities varies significantly throughout England and Wales, whilst in Scotland the Grant no longer existed. Additionally, the financial contribution local authorities themselves make towards an Emergency Management service varied enormously around the U.K.. These issues were reflected in the hypothesis "The funding an Emergency Management service receives from Civil Defence Grant and/or by in-house local authority financial contribution influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is provided". Whilst many practitioners argue an Emergency Management service should be provided to respond to the findings of a comprehensive risk assessment of an area, the E.P.S. argue in

reality it is funding that dictates the work undertaken by Emergency Management professionals.

The legislative base for the service remains in the context of Civil Defence which arguably does not reflect the role and diversity of the current Emergency Management service provided by authorities. Hence the hypothesis “The legislative base to which a local authority’s Emergency Management service operates influences the way in which the service is provided” is included in the study.

The potential importance of service monitoring was reflected in the hypothesis “The way in which an Emergency Management service is monitored nationally influences how it is provided”. Emergencies, as discussed earlier, can occur in any place at any time. It is, therefore, important services are provided to the highest possible standard taking into account the experiences of others. It could be argued that for good practice and lessons learnt to be disseminated effectively a national body overseeing the work of local authority Emergency Management services is needed. Additionally, dedicated performance indicators could provide a mechanism for assessing the effectiveness of services being provided.

The literature also suggested cultural factors (i.e. geographical location within the U.K., structure, high level support and working boundaries) also impacted upon how Emergency Management services were delivered. Geographical location was a factor because England, Wales and Scotland have differing laws, customs and more recently



political representation, i.e. the Welsh National Assembly and the Scottish Parliament.

As emergencies do not respect geographical boundaries, such differences have the potential to hamper emergency response by creating additional confusion. In addition to location, an authority's structure could potentially influence a service was delivered and perceived. It can be argued it is clear where responsibility for the service lies within a Single Tier authority. It is unclear, however, where responsibility rests in the Two Tier system, i.e. at Shire County level, Shire District or both. This confusion can result in duplication of effort, conflicting procedures or in work not being undertaken at all.

Working boundaries also influenced the service's delivery. For example, since their break away from former Shire County Councils following Local Government Re-organisation, some unitary authorities had started to perform their own Emergency Management service in order to take over its ownership whilst others had decided to jointly provide the service with the former County in order to try to benefit from economies of scale. There was a suggestion that levels of commitment from Elected Members and Chief Officers towards the service varied throughout mainland U.K., often being influenced by the number and severity of emergencies to have occurred within their area. For example, the literature review indicated Members and Officers in a local authority that had experienced an emergency first hand tended to be more supportive of the service than those Members and Officers from local authorities without experience of an emergency (County Durham and Darlington Emergency Planning Unit, September 2000). These issues were reflected in the hypothesis "The cultural elements of a local authority in relation to its geographical location, structure, high level support and working boundaries influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is

provided”. It could be argued that it is clear where responsibility for Emergency Management lay within a Single Tier local authority. It was unclear, however, where the responsibility rested in the Two Tier system, i.e. at Shire County level, Shire District level or both. This confusion could result in a duplication of effort, conflicting procedures or result in work not being undertaken at all.

Finally, the literature review suggested public awareness of not only the Emergency Management service but also the local authorities role before, during and after an emergency was extremely vague (Vary, 2000). These issues were considered in the hypothesis “The publics’ level of awareness and understanding of the local authority Emergency Management service influences the effectiveness of the service”. In the event of an emergency, it is obviously the public who will be affected. In many instances, a member of the public could be the first to report an emergency to the emergency services. Indeed, in rural areas it is often possible that the public may start to respond to an emergency before the appropriate official bodies arrive at the scene. It can be argued the public should be aware of and have an understanding of this service in advance of an actual emergency occurring so as to improve any subsequent response.

The key variables upon which each hypothesis was based were influenced by a range of factors:

- Implications of devolution;
- Beliefs regarding whether changes are needed in local government decision making and service delivery;

- Integration of service into an authority's corporate aims and objectives;
- How the service is currently funded;
- Beliefs regarding how the service should be funded (by specific central government grant, by local authority, by combination, external sponsorship and funding);
- How the service is currently delivered;
- Views regarding performance indicators and Inspectorates as ways of improving the service;
- Level of confidence in providing a service which reflects the needs of the local community;
- Views regarding regionalisation;
- Understanding of, and agreement with, Best Value;
- Approach towards Best Value ahead of legislative duty including the proposed ways of supporting the implementation of a Best Value Review via the application of various existing frameworks;
- Previous experience of emergency response;
- Views on the role of the public in Emergency Management.

To reflect these influences, a range of supporting statistical tests were devised to identify areas of significance related to the hypotheses developed (Appendix G).

The hypotheses developed could not be evaluated specifically with respect to perceptions of Best Value to Emergency Management using any existing literature. It was necessary

to collect primary data that in turn could be used to test the hypotheses using appropriate statistical analyses in order to reach valid conclusions (Saunders et al., 2000), hence supporting the positivist research philosophy outlined earlier in the chapter.

### Stage Two: Survey Of Emergency Management Stakeholders

Careful consideration was given as to the best way to obtain appropriate primary data in order to test and develop the hypotheses devised. Several options were identified for collecting primary data as shown in Table 5.1.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Options Considered For Gathering Primary Data:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study of archives/collection</li> <li>• Field observation</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Questionnaire survey</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Howard and Sharp, 1992)</p>
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Table 5.1.: Options Considered For Gathering Primary Data

In order to determine the most appropriate data collection mechanism two questions were considered. First, “what type of data is required?” and secondly “who are the target audience?”.

When this study first commenced in 1998, it was the intention to explore the new and developing concept of Best Value in its application within a long-standing but arguably

out-dated Emergency Management service. It would have been very difficult to seek factual answers to questions such as ‘What forms of consultation mechanism(s) will be used when subjecting your Emergency Management service to Best Value?’ because at this time most local authorities were still unsure of the exact requirements of Best Value. However, Best Value had been well publicized through professional publications, and as such, local authorities potentially understood the overall concept and its intended aim. This provided a good opportunity to gather information regarding the initial perceptions of Best Value amongst a range of stakeholders about Best Value being applied specifically to the Emergency Management service. A method of data collection was required for mass data generation (both quantitative and qualitative) and for its subsequent analysis.

The answer to the second question was very much influenced by the need to measure perceptions. Previous research within Emergency Management, whilst not in relation to Best Value, had been limited to eliciting the views of the Chief Emergency Planning Officers and/or Chief Executives. For example, the Home Office issued a consultation document and accompanying questionnaire in 1997 entitled “Civil Protection In England and Wales” to all local authority Chief Executives and Chief Emergency Planning Officers to elicit views regarding legislation, working boundaries, quality standards and funding (Home Office, 1997), however, no rationale was provided as to why this exercise had such a limited target audience (Cunningham, May 2001). It was decided this research should not be so restrictive and should take into consideration the perceptions of local authority employees with a key interest in Emergency Management in the 441 local

authorities in England, Scotland and Wales (composition shown in Table 5.2.). These employees were Chief Executives, Emergency Management professionals, Best Value Managers and Elected Members with responsibility for overseeing the committee to which the service reported. It was felt this diverse range would provide a balanced insight into the research question given that all stakeholders would be allowed to provide opinions and have them taken into consideration.

Composition Of Local Authorities In England, Scotland and Wales

- |   |   |                     |
|---|---|---------------------|
| • 34 English County Councils                  | } | English Two Tier    |
| • 238 English Shire District/Borough Councils | } |                     |
| • 33 London Boroughs                          | } |                     |
| • 36 English Metropolitan Boroughs            | } | English Single Tier |
| • 46 English Unitaries                        | } |                     |
| • 22 Welsh Unitaries                          |   |                     |
| • 32 Scottish Unitaries                       |   |                     |

(Source: Vary, 2000)

Table 5.2.: Composition of Local Authorities In England, Scotland and Wales

From the options in Table 5.1., field observation and archival data analysis were deemed inappropriate. Field observations of a small number of local authorities would have resulted in obtaining detailed information about how individuals from the same authority perceived Best Value but would not necessarily provide a representative reflection of how the wider masses perceived Best Value. Owing to the newness of Best Value, no relevant archival data was available for analysis. Therefore, the most suitable options for collecting primary data were either interview or questionnaire survey as both offered the

potential to collect valuable data. Careful consideration was given to both options. Interviews would have established personal contact with the target audience and questions could have been clearly explained with further probes being made as necessary. With this approach, a rapport could have been established that would hopefully have resulted in obtaining very detailed information for subsequent analysis. However, it quickly became apparent this approach would have been impractical in terms of time and subsistence costs when considering the number of views being sought. A questionnaire offered a cost effective way of seeking the views of a very large number of geographically dispersed people. Additionally, respondents could complete the questionnaire within a set timescale thereby giving them time to think and reflect and fit in completion with their other commitments. However, several limitations were also identified with the questionnaire approach, i.e. questions could be misinterpreted resulting in irrelevant information being obtained, the remoteness between author and respondent could result in a low response rate or alternatively the questionnaire being passed to another person for completion thereby affecting the representation of information received. Screening of data to ensure reliability in terms of individual perception being recorded will be discussed later in this chapter. As Best Value was in its infancy (and being approached in a diverse range of ways as shown in Appendix A) it was important to contact as many stakeholders as possible to gauge their perception of this new initiative prior to its implementation (Howard and Sharp, 1992). For this study, it was possible to identify and contact those deemed earlier as being stakeholders and for this reason a census was undertaken, i.e. the questionnaire was distributed to all stakeholders meaning there was the potential to obtain a 100% response rate. Despite the

limitations of using a questionnaire, it was considered this approach was still the most appropriate for the study providing the questionnaire was carefully designed and piloted to ensure potential limitations were reduced as much as possible.

Three questionnaire delivery techniques were considered, i.e. by one-to-one interview, telephone and post. Although delivery via one-to-one interview would have ensured relevant detailed information was obtained, this approach would have been impractical in terms of time and subsistence costs as well as logistics. Delivery by telephone also meant relevant detailed information could have been obtained and that the geographical location of the stakeholder would be irrelevant. However, it would have been particularly difficult, not to mention very expensive and time consuming, to gain access to the target audience via telephone in order to deliver the questionnaire. Indeed, it would have been virtually impossible to get direct telephone access to a local authority Chief Executive for the purpose of completing a questionnaire. Many of the questions surrounding Best Value and Emergency Management required a considered answer, in particular those of a political nature. It was felt a postal questionnaire would provide the most cost effective option when considering the size of the target audience and their geographical spread as well as having the additional benefit of allowing respondents time to complete and return their response in a confidential way given the political content. Therefore, a decision was made to issue a questionnaire via post reflecting Howard and Sharp's belief (1992) *"postal surveys are a favoured way of seeking to acquire data from a large number of respondents"*. A recognized major limitation of the postal delivery method was the potential for a low response rate. To overcome this, a structured questionnaire was



drafted building upon issues from the literature review and personal working knowledge of the service. Careful consideration was given to Oppenheim's belief (1984) that a questionnaire must be designed to reflect the pre-determined research aims and ensure only data relevant to those aims is collected. A questionnaire was drafted with a clear structure and questions grouped so stakeholders could understand them and respond by providing data suitable for statistical analysis (Gill and Johnson, 1997). Four inter-related factors were considered during the design stage: focus, phraseology, form of response as well as sequencing and overall presentation (Gill and Johnson, 1997).

#### Questionnaire Focus

The purpose of the questionnaire was to gain an insight into how Emergency Management services were currently delivered, determine what authorities were doing regarding Best Value in advance of it becoming a statutory duty before moving on to elicit their perceptions as to the applicability and worth of Best Value within Emergency Management. Focus was maintained by continually assessing whether the questions were relevant to the research question, as the more focused the questions the more valuable the data supplied. Such specific focus at this stage ensured no unnecessary questions were asked. It was believed a stakeholder would be more inclined to complete a well designed, focused questionnaire than one portraying itself as having no specific purpose (Gill and Johnson, 1997).

### Question Phraseology

The phrasing of questions was vital in ensuring desired responses were obtained (Oppenheim, 1984). For this questionnaire, a decision was made to use the phrase ‘Emergency Planning’ rather than ‘Emergency Management’ because throughout England, Scotland and Wales at this point in time the vast majority of Emergency Management services were provided by Emergency Planning Units. Questions were worded so no bias was conveyed. Every effort was made to keep questions short, simple and within the stakeholders’ capabilities to answer (Hague, 1998). In addition to phraseology, question structure was also important. It was felt that incorporating a mix of question structures, i.e. open-ended questions, multiple choice questions and dichotomous response questions (Brannick and Roche, 1997) into the questionnaire would encourage stakeholders to respond by making the questionnaire easier to complete. It was also felt the strengths and limitations of each type of question structure would complement each other. For example, open-ended questions have the potential to produce very rich detailed responses allowing respondents to express their views which may not have previously been considered but because of the lack of response structure, many respondents could find this type of question hard to answer. Information obtained from this type of question could also be difficult to code and analyse. For this reason, only a limited number of this type of question were used in instances where they were considered essential. For example, “What mechanisms has your local authority got in place to involve Elected Members in Best Value?”. Multiple choice questions asked a

question and gave a choice of alternative responses, either attitudinal or factual, and from which the stakeholder would choose the most appropriate by placing a tick in the corresponding box. While responses are easy to compare and statistically manipulate, data received can be distorted as responses are fixed and stakeholders are forced to choose which means spontaneity and expressiveness are not captured. For example, “The level of Chief Officer commitment which Emergency Management in my local authority receives is – non-supportive; aware but no involvement; supportive when required; very supportive, takes active interest; uncertain”. Dichotomous questions were also incorporated into the questionnaire. Such questions, an extreme type of multiple choice question, offered the stakeholders a choice of two responses. While such questions are quick to answer, there were very few issues so black and white as to only have two possible answers. For example, “I am aware of the Best Value initiative – yes, I am aware; no, I am not aware”.

### The Form of Response

At the design stage, consideration was given to how data collected would permit subsequent analysis via computer aided, statistical manipulation to test hypotheses. Two different types of scales were incorporated into the questionnaire to measure the strength of respondents’ feelings towards key variables (Hague, 1998), i.e. nominal scale and Likert scale. Nominal scales allowed a variable to be measured in terms of two or more different categories but have no arithmetic value. This scale was incorporated to assist in identifying the profile of stakeholders. For example, “My local authority is located in–

England, Scotland and Wales”. The Likert scale allowed the gauging of a stakeholder’s strength of feeling towards a statement. For example, “Emergency Plans should be public documents – strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, strongly disagree”. From the outset of questionnaire design, it was recognised incorporating measurement scales would not only encourage stakeholders to respond to questions but when considering the size of the target audience the data obtained from these scales could be easily coded, analysed and the results be interpreted.

### Question Sequencing and Presentation

Once consideration had been given to the question to be asked, thought was given to the most appropriate way in which to sequence questions. Questions were grouped into themes to ensure the questionnaire had a logical flow moving from one closely connected issue to another (Gill and Johnson, 1997) while ensuring ideas were not put into respondent minds as to how they should answer. It was acknowledged sequencing was vitally important when developing a postal self-completion questionnaire as it could be a key influencer in whether a stakeholder understands the purpose of the research and decides to complete (Gill and Johnson, 1997). Table 5.3. presents the themes used to group questions. Each theme ensured the key variables of funding, legislation, service monitoring, culture and public awareness were explored in-depth.

Grouping Themes

- Current Emergency Management service delivery
- Current public awareness of Emergency Management
- Current understanding of Best Value
- Current expectations of Best Value
- Current expectations of Best Value in Emergency Management
- National Emergency Planning Unit
- Working boundaries
- Legislation
- Funding
- National Emergency Planning Inspectorate
- Performance indicators
- Future Emergency Management service delivery
- Future role of public in Emergency Management

Table 5.3.: Grouping Themes

All of these themes were identified via the literature review as having potential influence on the achievement of Best Value within Emergency Management. All questions devised were critically reviewed and the most appropriate selected for inclusion in the questionnaire. Questions were sequenced to encourage a stakeholder to complete the questionnaire by commencing with those seen as relatively easy to answer before moving on to the arguably more challenging questions. It was felt if difficult questions were asked at the start, there would be a strong probability respondents would not attempt questionnaire completion (Hague, 1998).

The overall presentation of the questionnaire, its conciseness and layout, were also important in helping to obtain as high a response rate as possible (Gill and Johnson, 1997). A title was given to the questionnaire clearly disclosing the purpose of the research and identifying the author (Sekaran, 2000). Clear instructions were incorporated to ensure stakeholders knew which questions to answer and which routes to take depending upon the answers given. For example, when stakeholders were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the statement “Emergency Planning is a service which must be delivered by local authority personnel” those who ‘strongly agreed’, ‘agreed’ or were ‘uncertain’ were then routed to answer the question “Please describe how Emergency Planning could be delivered other than by local authority personnel” whilst those who responded ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ were routed to a different question. Completion instructions were stated at the beginning of the questionnaire and where appropriate in the various sections of it. For example, at the beginning of the questionnaire stakeholders were asked to complete all sections, use block print or tick the appropriate box to indicate their response before returning their completed questionnaire in a reply-paid envelope.

Prior to distributing the questionnaire to its target audience, it was piloted to ensure potential stakeholders understood and interpreted correctly the questions asked (Howard and Sharp, 1992).

### Questionnaire Piloting

Piloting was essential to identify any fundamental flaws and rectify them prior to mass distribution (Murphy, 1997). This also helped to ensure the questionnaire's reliability and validity. Reliability was important to ensure the questionnaire was consistent and produced similar results under constant conditions on all occasions (Bell, 1993). Validity was equally important to ensure a question would measure what it was supposed to measure (Sekaran, 2000).

The draft questionnaire was piloted with a representative sample of proposed Emergency Management stakeholders as shown in Table 5.4. Initial contact was made with all proposed pilot respondents via telephone to explain the purpose of the research and to gain their commitment to the process. Written confirmation and instruction were then issued through the postal system to each pilot along with a copy of the questionnaire. Each pilot respondent was asked to complete the questionnaire and provide constructive feedback covering a range of important issues, e.g. whether the questions made sense, if the most appropriate options were given in multiple choice questions, were completion instructions clear, were routing sequences adequate so that a respondent knew where to go next and was sufficient space provided for answers. Feedback was obtained through either telephone conversation or face-to-face interview depending upon the pilot respondent's geographic location.

<u>The Piloting Process</u>			
<u>Type of Pilot</u>	<u>Pilot Details</u>	<u>Method of Delivering questionnaire</u>	<u>Method of obtaining feedback</u>
<u>Elected Member</u>	1 Elected Member representing Shire District Council.	Via postal system.	Face-to-face interview.
	1 Elected Member representing Shire County Council plus Combined Fire Authority.	Via postal system.	Via telephone conversation.
<u>Chief Executive</u>	1 Chief Executive representing Shire District Council.	Via postal system.	Face-to-face interview.
<u>Best Value Managers</u>	1 Best Value Manager representing a Shire County Council.	Via postal system.	Face-to-face interview.
	1 Best Value Manager representing Shire District Council.	Via postal system.	Via telephone conversation.
<u>Emergency Management Professionals</u>	1 EPO representing Shire District, Shire County, Unitary and Combined Fire Authority	Via postal system	Face-to-face interview
	1 PEPO representing Shire District and Shire County	Via postal system	Via telephone conversation
	1 EPO representing Metropolitan Boroughs and FCDA	Via postal system	Face-to-face interview
	1 CEPO representing Unitary	Via postal system	Via telephone conversation

Table 5.4.: The Piloting Process

The piloting process concluded a questionnaire was the most appropriate data collection mechanism for this study. The process also suggested the variables identified in Table



5.3. were relevant to the study. As a result of piloting, the questionnaire was amended to incorporate the constructive feedback received.

To reduce the amount of text in the questionnaire and make it less daunting to a potential respondent, instructions were placed at the start of each section of the questionnaire rather than being printed before each individual question. Several questions were reworded in order to make them clearer. For example, “Please indicate how many Emergency Planning Officer(s) were/are/will be employed by your local authority in the following financial years” was amended to read “How many designated full-time equivalent Emergency Planning Officer(s) were/are/will be employed by your local authority in the following financial years?”, “I believe that Emergency Planning is fully integrated into the culture of my local authority” was amended to read “I believe that Emergency Planning is fully integrated into the corporate aims and objectives of my local authority” in order to incorporate current terminology, “Please tick the appropriate box to indicate whether you feel that you receive enough information about the Best Value initiative from your own local authority” was reworded to incorporate the word ‘quality’ as follows “Do you think you receive enough quality information about the Best Value initiative from your own local authority?” thereby taking into consideration the pilot respondents comments they were often deluged by Best Value ‘junk mail’.

The piloting identified several questions actually contained multiple questions in a single instance. For example, “Is it necessary for local government to change its approach to decision making and service delivery?” was subsequently broken down into two

questions one focusing upon the issue of decision-making and the other upon the issue of service delivery.

One of the common comments made by pilot respondents was that they believed the questionnaire was lengthy and this could deter potential respondents. Several questions were removed when it became apparent the responses received to them did not add any value to the data collected. For example, “Please tick the appropriate box below to indicate whether Emergency Planning Officers in your local authority have been consulted during the Best Value deliberations”, “Please tick the appropriate box below to indicate whether Emergency Planning Officers in your local authority have received any Best Value awareness training”, “Please tick the appropriate box to indicate whether Emergency Planning Officers will be given Best Value training in the future” and “All local authorities should have Business Continuity Plans enabling them to deal with an emergency that affects not only the community but which threatens the authority’s ability to continue operating as normal”.

Several new questions were incorporated where information gaps were identified. For example, the question “Have Best Value responsibilities been assigned to an Officer(s) in your local authority with other responsibilities?” was incorporated to determine how authorities that had not appointed a dedicated Officer were tackling Best Value. Section Four of the questionnaire contained a series of statements to which stakeholders were asked to indicate their level of agreement. Following piloting, the sequencing of these statements was re-ordered into a more logical flow, i.e. service consistency, the need for a

national Emergency Planning Unit, working boundaries, legislation, funding, service monitoring and public awareness.

Two questions were highlighted as being potentially problematic. The final questions in Section 4; “Please identify what you believe to be the three biggest threats to local authority Emergency Planning successfully adopting Best Value” and “Please identify what you hope will be the three main benefits of Best Value in Emergency Planning”. Several pilot respondents, particularly those with either a knowledge of Emergency Management or Best Value but not of both issues, felt these questions were particularly difficult and time consuming to answer. More worryingly, the pilot respondents stated these questions and the time and thought needed to complete them would potentially deter them from answering the questionnaire itself. In response to these comments, the questions were made easier to complete by providing a range of possible answers from which respondents could identify and rank in order their responses. Possible answers were identified by referring to the literature review findings. For example, one of the previously problematic questions was rephrased and designed to incorporate an ordinal scale to read “Please identify from the list below three issues which you believe will be the biggest constraints to local authority Emergency Planning successfully adopting Best Value. Place 1 in the box for the biggest threat, 2 for the second biggest etc?”. An ordinal scale was incorporated so responses could be rated in a league table to identify trends (Hague, 1998). The following options were listed with a corresponding tick box for each of the following:

- Lack of national quality standards for Emergency Planning;

- Lack of Emergency Planning Inspectorate;
- Inconsistent working boundaries;
- Decreasing Civil Defence Grant;
- Lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Planning Officers;
- Lack of understanding of Best Value by Elected Members;
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Planning by Best Value Managers;
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Planning by Chief Executives;
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Planning by Elected Members;
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Planning by the public;
- Lack of competition in Emergency Planning provision;
- Lack of Emergency Planning legislation;
- Best Value not being applied across the entire public sector;
- Greater accountability to the public;
- Uncertain;
- Other (if this was ticked, stakeholders were instructed to detail their own response).

All pilot respondents acknowledged the length of the questionnaire was unavoidable due to the lack of existing data relating to Best Value in Emergency Management. In light of these comments, statement questions were modified so stakeholders did not have to provide written explanation as to why they held a particular perception. For example, in the pilot questionnaire respondents were asked “Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statement by ticking the appropriate box below. Declining resources will

affect the attainment of Best Value in Emergency Planning”. Respondents were then given the options of ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘uncertain’, ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’. Once the pilot respondents had selected the most appropriate response, they were asked to explain why they held this perception so their rationale for holding a particular perception could be understood. However, the final questionnaire asked for an indication of perception only and not an explanation as to why a particular view was held.

### Ethical Issues And Official Endorsement

Careful consideration was given to ethical issues involved in preparing and distributing a mass survey, i.e. confidentiality, anonymity and access (Saunders et al., 2000). It was essential to respect and ensure respondent’s identities remained confidential and findings subsequently reported were done so they could not be attributable to individuals. The author was aware the unavoidable political nature of many of the questions could deter potential respondents from completing the survey. Therefore, to ensure access to all potential respondents official endorsement of the study was sought from several high profile organizations representing the needs of both local government and Emergency Management. In addition, it was felt endorsement from appropriate national bodies could help to overcome pilot respondents concerns the length of the questionnaire could deter potential respondents from participating. Named officers from the E.P.S., the Home Office, the Scottish Office, CoSLA, the L.G.A., SoLACE and the L.G.M.B. were contacted to seek their agreement to act as endorsees for the questionnaire. Endorsement did not influence the flow of this research and was sought to help raise the profile of the

work being undertaken and attempt to maximize the response rate by encouraging stakeholders to complete and return the questionnaire. Each of these organizations was sent a copy of the questionnaire and given the option of having a follow-up debrief with the author to discuss the questionnaire in detail.

The E.P.S. is the U.K.'s professional body for all those with an involvement in any form of crisis, emergency or disaster planning and management role. It was felt their endorsement would provide additional credibility to the questionnaire. The Society agreed to officially endorse the questionnaire and for their logo to be incorporated into it.

The Emergency Planning Division of the Home Office at this point in the research were the recognized central government department with day-to-day responsibility for Emergency Management in England and Wales, as explained earlier in Chapter Three. It was felt central government support for this questionnaire would raise its credibility amongst English and Welsh stakeholders. The Home Office officially endorsed the questionnaire and provided funding to cover printing and postal costs as well as data analysis.

Similarly, at this point in the research, the Scottish Office were the recognized central government department with responsibility for Emergency Management in Scotland. As for the Home Office, it was believed their backing would raise the credibility of the questionnaire with Scottish stakeholders. However, the Scottish Office (June 1999) declined to endorse the questionnaire stating “... *Best Value is being approached*

*differently in Scotland, besides which we have a different local authority structure ... so I would suggest that you confine your study to England and Wales*". Whilst this was a disappointing response, there is no evidence to suggest this impacted upon the subsequent responses received from Scottish stakeholders.

CoSLA provided the representative voice of Scotland's unitary local authorities and had developed and maintained working relationships with a wide range of organizations to promote the role of councils and ensure local government had greater control over their own affairs. In addition, CoSLA supported councils in their quest for continuous improvement in service delivery and providing value for money. At this point in time, all Scottish local authorities were members of CoSLA. It was felt CoSLA endorsement would raise the credibility of the research amongst Scottish stakeholders. At the request of CoSLA, a face-to-face meeting was held between the author and two policy officers in their Edinburgh offices to ensure the Scottish approach to Best Value was accurately reflected in the questionnaire. Certain questions were reworded accordingly to reflect the slight differences in Scottish and English/Welsh terminology. In addition, routing instructions were incorporated so Scottish stakeholders were not asked questions about Best Value pilot submissions as these only related to English and Welsh authorities. Once modified, the questionnaire was reviewed by CoSLA's three Emergency Planning Specialist Advisers who gave their endorsement to the questionnaire and agreed for the CoSLA logo to be incorporated thus perhaps negating the lack of Scottish Office endorsement.

The L.G.A. was formed on 1 April 1997 to represent all local authorities in England and Wales. As every local authority in England and Wales was a member of the L.G.A., it was felt their backing would enhance the credibility of the questionnaire. Despite several follow-up telephone calls, the L.G.A. did not respond. This lack of response was disappointing but, as with the earlier example of the Scottish Office, there is no evidence to suggest subsequent response rates were influenced by this factor.

SoLACE is the representative body for senior strategic managers in local government, i.e. those people who would ultimately be responsible for and lead an authority's response to an emergency. Local authority senior strategic managers were becoming deluged on a daily basis with questionnaires and other research requests and it was felt a questionnaire with SoLACE endorsement would carry greater credibility. Again, despite follow-up telephone calls, the author was unable to obtain a reply from SoLACE regarding their potential endorsement. This lack of response was disappointing but perhaps not surprising when considering the number of challenges this organization was facing as a result of central government's wider reform programme for local government.

The remit of the L.G.M.B. was to promote better practice within local authorities and assist them in more effectively meeting the needs of their local communities. In light of the principles of Best Value and its intended purpose, it was felt L.G.M.B. endorsement would enhance the credibility of the questionnaire, but it was not possible to obtain a response from them.



Endorsement for the questionnaire was obtained from the E.P.S., the Home Office and CoSLA. When comparing the issue of endorsement with the composition of stakeholders who returned their questionnaires, it is interesting to note the highest number of respondents overall were Emergency Management professionals, many of whom may perhaps have been members of the E.P.S.. In contrast, the second lowest number of respondents were from Chief Executives whose representative body SoLACE did not endorse the questionnaire. However, when considering Chief Executives on a geographical basis, Scottish Chief Executives returned a higher percentage of questionnaires than their English counterparts. This is particularly interesting when considering whilst SoLACE did not endorse the questionnaire, CoSLA (who represented Scottish local authorities) did give their endorsement perhaps negating this lack of support. These findings suggest those efforts made in seeking official endorsement for the questionnaire were potentially an extremely important factor in obtaining a high response rate, as indicated by the overall rate of response and the response rates for various sub-groups defined by role and location to be discussed later.

### The Final Questionnaire

A coded copy of the final questionnaire is contained in Appendix H. The final questionnaire was structured in five clear sections – “Background Issues”, “Approach To Emergency Planning”, “Response To Best Value”, “Best Value In Emergency Planning” and “Respondent’s Details”. Each section will now be discussed in detail.

## Section 1: Background Issues

The purpose of this section of the questionnaire was to develop a profile of the responding stakeholder. Three questions were asked, the responses to which indicated the stakeholder's position within the authority, the type of authority they represented and its geographical location. For ease of completion, all questions were multiple-choice and stakeholders were required to tick the appropriate box to indicate their response.

## Section 2: Approach To Emergency Planning

The aim of this section was to gain an understanding of how the stakeholder's service was currently provided and funded. A series of multiple choice questions were asked including "How is the Emergency Planning service provided?", "How many designated full-time equivalent Emergency Planning Officers are employed?", "What is the job title of your Emergency Planning Officers line manager?", "How much Civil Defence Grant does the local authority receive?", "What amount of financial contribution does the local authority make towards the Emergency Management service?" and "Does the Chief Executive have an Emergency Management role included in their job description?". These questions required factual responses and would help the author build a clear understanding of how services are currently provided. A series of questions were then asked to elicit stakeholders perceptions about current service delivery. These took the form of a series of statements to which stakeholders were asked to mark on a Likert scale their perception i.e. 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'uncertain', 'disagree' or 'strongly

disagree’. Statements covered the level of Elected Member and Chief Officer commitment towards the service, the level of integration into the authority’s corporate aims and objectives, if the local community were aware of the authority’s role before, during and after an emergency, if the local community were aware their authority provided an Emergency Management service and finally if the service provided reflected the needs of its local community.

### Section 3: Response To Best Value

The purpose of this section was to gain an insight into the stakeholder’s level of understanding of Best Value; what they felt could be achieved by it and what, if anything, the authority was doing in order to implement it ahead of a statutory duty. For example, stakeholders were asked to identify quality management model(s) currently used within their local authority. To assist stakeholders in responding to this question, six quality management models were listed (Balanced Scorecard, BS5750, Business Excellence Model, Charter Mark, Investors In People, ISO9000) as well as options for ‘Unsure’, ‘None’ and ‘Other’. Any stakeholder selecting the ‘Other’ option was asked to specify the quality management model(s) used by their authority. The purpose of this question was to identify those most commonly used quality models in order to evaluate their potential application within Emergency Management Best Value Reviews later in this research. Additionally, English and Welsh respondents were asked specific details about whether their local authority had submitted a pilot Best Value submission, and if so, its scope and success. A combination of dichotomous, multiple choice and open-ended

questions were asked. For example, the multiple choice question “Generally do you think it is necessary for local government to change its approach to decision making?” was asked with the options of “Yes, change is necessary”, “No, change is not necessary” and “Uncertain”. If a stakeholder considered local government did not need to change its approach to decision making there was a possibility this could influence their view of Best Value, e.g. it is an unnecessary burden and will not add value. Another example is the multiple choice question “Do you think Best Value differs radically from C.C.T.?” was asked with the options of “Yes, Best Value differs radically”, “No, Best Value does not differ radically” and “Uncertain”. Central government introduced Best Value as being radically different when compared to C.C.T.. The purpose of this question was to determine whether stakeholders, who would have to implement and comply with Best Value, would be of the same opinion.

#### Section 4: Best Value In Emergency Planning

Section 4 focused upon applying Best Value solely to Emergency Planning. Stakeholders were asked to indicate whether they believed the service could be improved by implementing Best Value, if they were already working towards Best Value as well as which organizations they intended to seek advice during this process. From this point onwards, stakeholders were given a series of statements based upon the grouping themes identified in Table 5.3. and asked to indicate on a Likert scales their perception. Statements asked included “Emergency Planning arrangements in England, Scotland and Wales should be capable of dovetailing together regardless of differences in national and

local laws and customs”, “Local authority Emergency Planning should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries than the current administrative boundaries used”, “Best Value can only be achieved in Emergency Planning if new civil protection legislation is introduced placing a statutory duty upon all local authorities”, “The Civil Defence Grant formula should arise from a risk/benefit analysis”, “A national Emergency Planning Inspectorate would raise the service’s standard and ensure that good practice was disseminated to all local authorities”, “National Emergency Planning performance indicators are an integral part of raising the service’s standard”, “Emergency Planning is a service which must be delivered by local authority personnel” and “The public need to have a say in pre-planning for emergencies”.

#### Section 5: Respondent’s Details

The final section in the questionnaire provided an opportunity for stakeholders to complete their name, job title, local authority and contact telephone number.

Stakeholders were thanked again for their participation and assured their responses would be treated as confidential. Responding stakeholders were given the opportunity to indicate, via ticking appropriate boxes, whether they would be willing to take part in any follow-up research and also if they would like to receive a summary of the findings from the census. It was felt by offering respondents the opportunity to get a copy of the interim research findings, this incentive would encourage a higher response rate (Murphy, 1997).

### Questionnaire Distribution

To encourage as high a response rate as possible, an explanatory covering letter was prepared introducing the questionnaire to potential responding stakeholders. This aimed to convince very busy local government officers they should complete the questionnaire (Hague, 1998). The covering letter explained the purpose of the questionnaire, the reason for seeking their views, how an interim findings report would be provided to those who responded, provided assurance replies would be confidential and finally thanked the stakeholder for their anticipated co-operation (Hague, 1998). Appendix I contains the covering letters that were personalized to each of the 1749 potential respondents (Table 5.5.) and accompanied the questionnaire when distributed on 10 September 1999 for return by 15 December 1999.

#### Distribution Of Questionnaires

- 387 English Chief Executives or equivalents
- 387 English Best Value Managers
- 387 English Elected Members
- 121 English Chief Emergency Planning Officers
- 215 English Emergency Planning Officers
- 32 Scottish Chief Executives
- 32 Scottish Best Value Managers
- 32 Scottish Elected Members
- 32 Scottish Chief Emergency Planning Officers
- 16 Scottish Emergency Planning Officers
- 22 Welsh Chief Executives
- 22 Welsh Best Value Managers
- 22 Welsh elected members
- 14 Welsh Chief Emergency Planning Officers
- 28 Welsh Emergency Planning Officers

Table 5.5.: Distribution of Questionnaires

From the 1749 questionnaires distributed, 630 completed questionnaires were returned plus 11 responses from stakeholders indicating their authority had a corporate policy of only completing statutory questionnaires. For example, *“I currently receive a large number of requests to take part in national surveys and regretfully I have now adopted a policy where I complete only statutory returns”* (Cannock Chase Council, September 1999) and *“I am really very sorry but I am having to draw the line now on the amount of time that I and my staff spend on questionnaires”* (Mid Sussex District Council, September 1999).

Table 5.6. details the composition of stakeholders who returned questionnaires according to their geographical location. For coding purposes, the term ‘English Single Tier’ comprises of English Metropolitan Borough Councils, London Borough Councils and English Unitary authorities. The term ‘English Two Tier’ comprises of Shire County Councils, Shire District Councils, Fire and Civil Defence Authorities and Combined Fire Authorities.

<u>Composition Of Stakeholders Returning Questionnaires</u>				
<u>Type of Authority</u>	<u>Post Holder</u>	<u>No. of Questionnaires Distributed</u>	<u>No. of Completed Questionnaires Returned</u>	<u>Response Rate (%)</u>
English Single Tier	Chief Executive	115	25	22
English Two Tier	Chief Executive	272	69	25
Welsh Unitary	Chief Executive	22	8	36
Scottish Unitary	Chief Executive	32	9	28
English Single Tier	Best Value Manager	115	38	33
English Two Tier	Best Value Manager	272	80	29
Welsh Unitary	Best Value Manager	22	10	45
Scottish Unitary	Best Value Manager	32	18	56
English Single Tier	Emergency Management professionals	105	65	62
English Two Tier	Emergency Management professionals	240	180	75
Welsh Unitary	Emergency Management professionals	40	22	55
Scottish Unitary	Emergency Management professionals	48	37	77
English Single Tier	Elected Member	115	24	21
English Two Tier	Elected Member	272	34	13
Welsh Unitary	Elected Member	22	4	18
Scottish Unitary	Elected Member	32	7	22
	TOTAL	1756	630	36

Table 5.6.: Composition Of Stakeholders Returning Questionnaires



From Table 5.6., it is apparent the highest percentage of completed questionnaires were received from Emergency Management professionals (irrespective of local authority structure) then Best Value Managers and Chief Executives. The lowest percentage of completed questionnaires was received from the Elected Members representing each type of authority structure. This result was perhaps not surprising as Emergency Management professionals are working within the field of Emergency Management on a day-to-day basis and have considerable operational experience. In contrast, Elected Members are involved in local authority decision making covering a diverse range of services of which Emergency Management represents only a very small part. The percentage responses received from Chief Executives and Elected Members were considerably lower compared with those received from Emergency Management professionals and Best Value Managers. As discussed earlier several returns were received indicating some authorities had introduced policies of only responding to statutory requests. This suggested follow-up requests to Chief Executives asking them to respond to the postal questionnaire would not be productive. Additionally, Elected Members in many local authorities are not directly involved in the operational aspects of Emergency Management but are kept informed verbally as to how an individual emergency response is progressing. As a consequence, it can be argued they perhaps do not have as great an understanding of the operational aspects of the service, and as a result are perhaps less inclined to participate in this type of study. For these reasons, no attempts were made to issue follow-up requests to either non-responding Chief Executives or Elected Members.

One key question the author asked was to what extent was the sample of respondents representative of the mainland U.K.'s Emergency Management stakeholder population.

A series of chi-squared tests (given the data was categorical Yes/No responses versus role or location) were undertaken to determine the extent of any association, and in-turn, potential for bias. These tests sought to identify:

- Association between response and location;
- Association between response and stakeholder role;
- Association between response and stakeholder role within the various locations;
- Association between response and location by various roles.

The results of these tests will now be discussed in relation to Table 5.7. shown below (workings can be found in Appendix J).

<u>Significant Differences Between Responses</u>		
<u>Response Details:</u>	<u>Significance Level:</u>	<u>Comment:</u>
Geographical Location	1%	Scottish and Welsh Unitaries more likely to respond than English Single and Two tier authorities.
Job Function	0.1%	Emergency Management professionals more likely to respond than Chief Executives, Best Value Managers and Elected Members.
Location of Best Value Managers	5%	Scottish and Welsh Unitaries more likely to respond than English Two Tier authorities
Location of Emergency Management professionals	1%	Welsh Unitaries more likely to respond than English Two Tier authorities
Role within English Single Tier	0.1%	Emergency Management professionals more likely to respond than Elected Members and Chief Executives

<u>Response Details:</u>	<u>Significance</u> <u>Level:</u>	<u>Comment:</u>
Role within English Two Tier	0.1%	Emergency Management professionals more likely to respond than Elected Members, Chief Executives and Best Value Managers
Role within Welsh Unitary	5%	Emergency Management professionals more likely to return than Elected Members and Chief Executives
Role within Scottish Unitary	0.1%	Emergency Management professionals more likely to return than Elected Members and Chief Executives

Note: The remaining possible pairings identified no significant differences.

Table 5.7.: Significant Differences Between Responses

Table 5.6. viewed the responses received from stakeholders working in different types of local authority structure. The highest percentage of completed questionnaires were received from Emergency Management professionals in all types of local authority structure followed by Best Value Managers, Chief Executives and then Elected Members consistently in all cases. Indeed, a highly significant association (0.1% level) was found between Emergency Management professionals in English Single Tier authorities, English Two Tier authorities and Scottish Unitaries returning completed questionnaires and a significant association (5% level) between Emergency Management professionals representing Welsh Unitaries. Overall, there was a strong significant association (0.1% level) between job function and response as indicated in Table 5.7., with Emergency Management professionals being more likely to respond compared with Chief Executives, Best Value Managers and Elected Members.

From the responses received, it was interesting to note in many instances the number of Scottish responses were significantly higher when compared with English and Welsh responses. For example, when comparing responses received from Emergency Management professionals, the number of Scottish responses were significantly higher (5% level) than the number of Welsh responses and the number of English Single Tier responses. When comparing responses (as shown in Table 5.7.) received from Best Value Managers, the number of Scottish responses were significantly higher (5% level) than the number of English Single Tier responses and were higher (1% level) than the number of English Two Tier responses. A possible explanation was that Scottish local authorities had, as discussed in Chapter Two, adopted a voluntary approach to Best Value unlike in England and Wales where Best Value was an impending statutory duty.

Another initial finding was that when comparing responses received from Emergency Management professionals the number of English Two Tier responses were significantly higher (5% level) than the number of English Single Tier responses. Two possible factors influencing this lower response are that many Single Tier authorities were newly created bodies and many were delivering an in-house Emergency Management service for the first time, and as such, they were perhaps still (at the time of survey) producing and implementing basic level policies.

The results of these tests, showed a representative sample of respondents from the U.K.'s Emergency Management stakeholder population had been achieved. A high number of responses were received with all sub-groups being represented above 5%, which is

suggested by Hague (1998) as being a poor rate. Whilst the significant differences between responses according to location and job function have been clearly explained, even those sub-groups with below 10 responses were not lower in proportion compared with the rest of their category.

### Data Screening And Analysis

Before commencing data analysis, initial tests were conducted to ensure independence of responses from stakeholders representing the same authorities. This was done to ensure questionnaires had been completed independently and responses reflected individual beliefs rather than reiterating the 'official' response of a local authority several times, i.e. in the Chief Executive's, Best Value Manager's, Emergency Management professionals and Elected Member's response. Testing was done in two ways. By comparing the written responses received from officers of the same local authority, it was possible to identify where identical responses were received from a multiple number of officers. From this point, the second phase of testing was to speak via the telephone to those respondents to determine whether questionnaires had been completed by the respondent in their own capacity or as a joint submission. As a result of this test of data validity and independence, 52 responses were removed as their independence could not be guaranteed.

Data analysis was subsequently undertaken on the remaining 578 responses. Coded data was entered into an Excel spreadsheet, ignoring all individual questions responses

returned as being ‘Uncertain’, and then incorporated into Minitab the statistical software package for subsequent analysis. At this point an interim findings report was issued to all stakeholders who participated in the survey and requested information on the progress of the study. The hypotheses developed earlier in this study were tested by transforming the information gathered into data via the process of analysis (Brown and Dowling, 1998). The data collected was overwhelmingly categorical, using Yes/No/Uncertain categories or scales from strongly disagree through to strongly agree. In order to present and summarise this data, percentage frequency distributions identifying modal groups as well as the overall levels of positivity and negativity have been used, together with bar charts for interesting response to individual questions. To look at association between responses to two questions (as defined by the relevant hypotheses) an extensive series of chi-square tests were conducted to determine whether or not two variables were independent or associated, and if associated the level of their significance (Williams and May, 1996). The findings of these tests are discussed in Chapter Six. Despite the differences in proportions of response by stakeholder groups, the data was not weighted prior to its analysis, given the overwhelming majority of the work to be done would involve bi-variate analysis described above (Hays, 1994 cited by Saunders et al., 2000).

### Stage Three: Development of Model for Best Value Implementation And Follow-up Research

One objective of this study was to evaluate the worth of using existing quality management tools as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review. An

evaluation process was undertaken to determine the extent to which existing tools would meet central government requirements of an effective Review as defined by the ‘Four Cs’ and provide the level of support that appeared to be required by the findings from the census in terms of perceived drivers and barriers of the Best Value Review process. A Best Value Review support model was subsequently developed with the explicit aim of assisting local authorities in conducting Emergency Management Best Value Reviews. The rationale for, and subsequent development and evaluation of, the support model is discussed in-depth in Chapters Seven and Eight.

#### Follow-up Research

At this point the research strategy was complemented by adopting a phenomenological research strategy for two reasons. First, this strategy permitted to a small extent triangulation in terms of verifying the results from the census of stakeholders. This was important as the survey took place before Best Value was a statutory duty, and it became essential to determine to what extent, if at all, stakeholders initial perceptions were influenced by the actual process of Best Value implementation. Secondly, during the timescale between data collection and support model development, all authorities had started to implement Best Value. The stakeholder census respondents were approached to assess whether their initial perception of Best Value had changed as a result of undertaking an Emergency Management Best Value Review. In addition, it was also decided that whilst seeking the views of those with first-hand experience of going through an Emergency Management Best Value Review it would be extremely beneficial

for the development of this research if those stakeholders also considered the support model by applying their own experiences to it. This approach allowed for triangulation of the previous research findings and to measure the extent of maturation of the actual Best Value Review process within an Emergency Management service. Triangulation was essential to ensure the results from the survey of Emergency Management stakeholders were intuitive and meaningful, especially since they formed the basis upon which a Best Value Review support model would be developed. Moreover, by applying the phenomenological strategy to this aspect of the research, the interviewees could perhaps provide new, more in-depth interpretations previously not considered in order to aid interpretation to the findings from the quantitative analysis (Saunders et al., 2000).

A brief follow-up questionnaire (see Appendix K) was devised and sent to all original census participants who indicated they were willing to participate in follow-up research and were also expecting to subject their Emergency Management service to a Best Value Review in 2000/01. Additionally, the same follow-up questionnaire was also sent to all original census participants who indicated they were willing to participate in follow-up research but were uncertain in which year their service would be subjected to a Best Value Review. This questionnaire contained only three questions because the questionnaire itself was only a means to identify potential interviewee candidates, rather than being an actual tool for data collection. Personalized covering letters accompanied the questionnaire (see Appendix L). The responses received to these questions allowed stakeholders to be grouped according to whether their service had been reviewed in the financial year 2000/01 or before, whether they believed their service had improved or not



as a result of the Best Value Review and if they would be prepared to take part in further follow-up research. In total, 142 follow-up questionnaires were distributed to those stakeholders who participated in the census indicating they were subjecting their Emergency Management service to a Best Value Review in Year One and would be willing to take part in follow-up research (30 in total) plus those census participants who indicated they would be willing to take part in follow-up research but were unsure when their service would be subjected to a Best Value Review (112 in total), as shown in Table 5.8. Appendix M contains an initial findings report from the follow-up questionnaire survey.

Composition Of Distribution Of Follow-Up Questionnaire

Perceptions Of Stakeholders Who Subjected Emergency Management Service To Best Value Review In Year One

<u>Type of authority reviewing Emergency Management In 2000/01</u>	<u>Yes, Emergency Management can be improved</u>	<u>No, Emergency management cannot be improved</u>	<u>Uncertain whether service can be improved</u>
Scottish Unitary	1	0	1
Welsh Unitary	1	0	0
English Single Tier	6	2	0
English Two Tier	12	2	5

As a contrast this equates to:

<u>Type of Stakeholder</u>	<u>Yes, Emergency Management can be improve</u>	<u>No, Emergency Management cannot be improved</u>	<u>Uncertain whether service can be improved</u>
Best Value Officer	5	1	2
Chief Executive	1	0	0
Emergency Management Officer	12	3	3
Elected member	2	0	1

Perceptions Of Stakeholders Who Where Unsure When Emergency Management Service To Be Subjected To Best Value Review

<u>Type of authority</u>	<u>Yes, Emergency Management can be improved</u>	<u>No, Emergency management cannot be improved</u>	<u>Uncertain whether service can be improved</u>
Scottish Unitary	8	1	4
Welsh Unitary	6	1	2
English Single Tier	17	1	10
English Two Tier	37	12	13

As a contrast this equates to:

<u>Type of Stakeholder</u>	<u>Yes, Emergency Management can be improve</u>	<u>No, Emergency Management cannot be improved</u>	<u>Uncertain whether service can be improved</u>
Best Value Officer	23	4	8
Chief Executive	4	0	2
Emergency Management Officer	35	10	16
Elected member	6	1	3

Table 5.8.: Composition Of Distribution Of Follow-Up Questionnaire

Ninety seven completed follow-up questionnaires were returned which identified eighteen stakeholders had subjected their service to a Best Value Review in 2000/01. As a direct result of their experience of participating in a Review, it was felt the best way to get in-depth information from each stakeholder, and initially pilot the support model, was via a one-to-one interview situation. This approach would elicit from the interviewee detailed information and opinion as well as providing the author with the opportunity to seek clarification as necessary (Allison et al., 1996). Indeed, it can be argued interviews provide higher quality information allowing a more realistic in-sight to an issue (Howard and Sharp, 1992), an advantage which underpins the selection of the phenomenological research strategy by aiming to not only understand organizational processes but also keeping up-to-date with changes within the research environment (Saunders et al., 2000). Table 5.9. shows the composition of follow-up responses, i.e. the stakeholders position,

type of authority, geographical location, initial perception of Best Value in the census, current perception of Best Value and their willingness to take part in one-to-one interview.

<u>Composition Of Follow-up Stakeholders Who Indicated Their Emergency Management Service Had Been Subjected To A Best Value Review</u>						
<u>Stakeholder No.</u>	<u>Stakeholders Position</u>	<u>Type of Local Authority</u>	<u>Geographic Location</u>	<u>Initial Perception</u>	<u>Follow-up Perception</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
1.	Emergency Management Officer	English Single Tier	West Midlands	Service will improve	Service has improved	One-to-one interview organized
2.	Emergency Management Officer	English Two Tier	South West England	Service will improve	Service has improved	Interview not possible officer retiring
3.	Emergency Management Officer	English Two Tier	South East England	Service will improve	Uncertain whether service has improved	One-to-one interview organized
4.	Emergency Management Officer	English Two Tier	South West England	Service will improve	Service has improved	Officer unavailable for interview
5.	Emergency Management Officer	English Two Tier	South West England	Service will not improve	Service has not improved	One-to-one interview organized
6.	Best Value Officer	English Two Tier	Yorkshire	Service will improve	Service has improved	Officer unavailable for interview.
7.	Elected Member	English Two Tier	Yorkshire	Uncertain whether the service will improve	Uncertain whether service has improved	Officer unavailable for interview.
8.	Emergency Management Officer	English Two Tier	North West England	Uncertain whether the service will improve	Service has improved	One-to-one interview organized.

<u>Stakeholder No.</u>	<u>Stakeholders Position</u>	<u>Type of Local Authority</u>	<u>Geographic Location</u>	<u>Initial Perception</u>	<u>Follow-up Perception</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
9.	Emergency Management Officer	English Two Tier	North West England	Service will improve	Uncertain whether service has improved	Officer not directly involved in Best Value Review therefore unsure of value of input into research
10.	Best Value Officer	English Single Tier	Yorkshire	Uncertain whether the service will improve	Service has improved	Officer unavailable for interview.
11.	Emergency Management Officer	English Single and Two Tier *	South West England	Service will improve	Service has not improved	Officer left authority to work elsewhere.
12.	Emergency Management Officer	English Single and Two Tier *	South West England	Uncertain whether the service will improve	Service has not improved	Request had been made for Best Value Review to be undertaken again with wider remit
13.	Best Value Officer	English Two Tier	South West England	Service will improve	Service has not improved	Officer unavailable for interview
14.	Emergency Management Officer	English Single and Two Tier *	North East England	Service will not improve	Service has improved	One-to-one interview organized
15.	Emergency Management Officer	English Two Tier	South West England	Uncertain whether the service will improve	Service has improved	One-to-one interview organized
16.	Best Value Manager	English Single Tier	South East England	Uncertain whether the service	Service has improved	Officer unavailable for

				will improve		interview
<u>Stakeholder No.</u>	<u>Stakeholders Position</u>	<u>Type of Local Authority</u>	<u>Geographic Location</u>	<u>Initial Perception</u>	<u>Follow-up Perception</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
17.	Emergency Management Officer	Scottish Unitary	South East Scotland	Uncertain whether the service will improve	Service has not improved	Best Value Review actually taking place in 2001/02
18.	Emergency Management Officer	English Two Tier	South East England	Service will improve	Uncertain whether service has improved	Best Value Review actually taking place in 2001/02
* Provide service to both English Single Tier and English Two Tier authorities						

Table 5.9.: Composition Of Follow-up Stakeholders Who Indicated Their Emergency Management Service Had Been Subjected To A Best Value Review

Consideration was given to the most appropriate way of conducting one-to-one interviews, i.e. via telephone or face-to-face setting. Those stakeholders who agreed to participate in an interview were spread over a wide geographical area which would have made the telephone technique an appropriate approach to use. However, it was felt it would have been very difficult to not only make contact with stakeholders via this method, but also to maintain contact bearing in mind they would be in their normal work environment with their daily work distractions around them. Due to the level of detailed work needed to be undertaken during a Best Value Review and the diversity of its implementation, the interview would need to be quite lengthy, favouring a face-to-face situation. It would also be difficult to explain and discuss the Review support model via a telephone conversation. It was also considered that in a face-to-face interview it would be much easier to establish a rapport with an interviewee thereby gaining their

commitment to the research and ensuring they had a clear time slot in their working diary allowing them to be as free as possible from work distractions to concentrate upon the questions being asked. A potential limiting factor with the face-to-face interview was that stakeholders could feel uneasy about their lack of anonymity which could influence their responses when being asked for their opinions and experiences. This once again raised the issue of research ethics which was overcome by reassuring stakeholders that any information disclosed during the process would be treated in the strictest confidence and it would not be possible to identify them from the results subsequently produced (Saunders et al., 2000).

It is important to stress no Welsh or Scottish stakeholders were represented in this one-to-one interview process. Whilst this could be criticized as a limitation of the research, extensive investigation was undertaken to identify Scottish and Welsh local authorities which had subjected their Emergency Management service to a Best Value Review. At that point in time, no such authorities had conducted an Emergency Management Best Value Review. This external factor did not detract from the quality or the relevance of the follow-up interviews as stakeholders from the full range of local authority structures (i.e. Single and Two Tier) were interviewed. At this point in the research, it was recognized further extensive evaluation of the support model would be needed at a later stage once it had been initially evaluated and amended in-line with the experiences of Emergency Management stakeholders participating in the series of one-to-one interviews. This more extensive evaluation process would incorporate the views of Scottish and Welsh Emergency Management stakeholders. In total six interviews took place as

detailed in Table 5.10. The final sample of interviewees selected whilst non-random were arguably representative in composition because the full range of Best Value outcomes were considered, i.e. “Yes, Best Value has improved the Emergency Management service”, “No, Best Value has not improved the service” and “Uncertain whether Best Value has improved the service”. This purposive sampling approach was influenced by the author’s practitioner-researcher knowledge, and was selected to ensure the chosen interviewees would be as informative as possible yet be representative of the population of Emergency Management professionals as possible. All follow-up interviews took place with Emergency Management professionals. This was not the intention because several other types of stakeholder (i.e. Best Value Managers and Elected Members) were contacted, all of whom unfortunately were unavailable to participate in follow-up interviews. However, those interviewees who agreed to participate in follow-up interviews had the advantage of not only having first-hand knowledge of Best Value but also had the additional advantage of understanding the service in great detail.

<u>Stakeholders For Follow-up Interviews</u>			
<u>Perception pre-Best Value Review (September 1999)</u>	<u>Perception post-Best Value Review (October 2001)</u>	<u>Type of local authority(s)</u>	<u>Geographic location</u>
“Yes, the service will improve”	“Yes, the service did improve”	English Single Tier (Metropolitan Borough council)	West Midlands England
“Yes, the service will improve”	“Uncertain”	English Single and Two Tier (County Council and English Districts)	South East England

<u>Perception pre-Best Value Review (September 1999)</u>	<u>Perception post-Best Value Review (October 2001)</u>	<u>Type of local authority(s)</u>	<u>Geographic location</u>
“No, the service will not improve”	“Yes, the service did improve”	English Single and Two Tier (English County Council, English Districts and English Unitary)	North East England
“No, the service will not improve”	“No, the service did not improve”	English Single and Two Tier (English County Council and English Districts)	South West England
“Uncertain”	“Yes, the service did improve”	English Single and Two Tier (County Council, English Districts and English Unitary)	North West England
“No, the service will not improve”	“Yes, the service did improve”	English Single and Two Tier (English County Council and English Districts)	South West England

Table 5.10.: Stakeholders For Follow-up Interviews

It was important to have a structure for these interviews while also recognizing stakeholders had differing perceptions of Best Value since undergoing their own Review. It was felt a structured interview would be too formalized and could restrict the author obtaining the potentially diverse range of stakeholder responses and experiences. However, it was felt by having no structure there was a danger the interview could become a rambling conversation and important information could be missed. It was decided to hold semi-structured interviews which would allow flexibility at the same time as ensuring the interview focus was not lost. Semi-structured interviews are best used in situations where not only the ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions are asked but also more



importantly the ‘why’ questions (Saunders et al., 2000). Some writers consider semi-structured interviews are best suited to exploring new topics in areas with highly variable characteristics where the experiences of interviewees is likely to vary widely (Healey and Rawlinson, 1994), e.g. Best Value being applied to the Emergency Management service. The issues identified during the literature review and the insight as a practitioner-researcher were key attributes in the selection of the semi-structured approach because they ensured not only could the key information from an interview be identified, but more importantly areas for further clarification and probing relevant to the research and the Emergency Management provision *par se* were pinpointed (Healey and Rawlinson, 1994).

Careful consideration was given to the most appropriate way of recording the data obtained during the interview process (Howard and Sharp, 1992), i.e. a prepared schedule completed by the author, memorizing the interview and writing up notes afterwards, making notes during the interview, tape recording the interview and producing transcripts later and finally, video recording the interview and producing transcripts later (Vary, 2000). Each option was considered. Due to travelling distance and space limitations, it was not practical to video record the interviews. However, the importance of accurately recording the interviews was paramount. Whilst it was felt to tape record the interviews would be intrusive and could possibly inhibit the interviewee, it was decided the most appropriate recording technique was to prepare a schedule that could be completed during the interview with supplementary notes being written if appropriate. The notes and schedule were written up in the form of a transcript after the interview and a copy sent to

the stakeholder for their approval. This method ensured all information was recorded accurately and was valid for subsequent interpretation.

#### Follow-Up Questions:

A series of core questions were devised that could be presented to all stakeholders regardless of their perception regarding the worth of an Emergency Management Best Value Review. Whilst the same core questions were asked to each stakeholder, the sequencing of some of the questions were altered to reflect the interviewee's perception. If a stakeholder had, for example, a negative perception of Best Value, they would be asked to discuss the negative aspects first before moving on to identify positive aspects whereas a stakeholder with a positive perception would be asked to first discuss the positive aspects before moving on to identify negative aspects. Each stakeholder was asked the questions "What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process?" and "What did you find the least valuable aspect of the Best Value process". The rationale for asking these questions was to identify the positive and negative elements of Best Value and to identify any emerging trends. Stakeholders were asked to provide detailed explanations to justify their responses.

All stakeholders were asked "Which aspects of the Best Value process (i.e. which of the 'Four Cs') did you find the most easy to apply and why?". Stakeholders were asked to explain their responses through either discussion, measurement or quantification. This question was asked as the 'Four Cs' underpin the whole Best Value Review process and

it was therefore important to identify any emerging trends and consider the impact of the perceived drivers and barriers upon the practical implementation of such a Review within Emergency Management. The reverse questions was given to all stakeholders, i.e.

“Which aspect of the Best Value process (i.e. which of the ‘Four Cs’) did you find the most difficult to apply and why?”. Again, this question was used to measure the detailed impact of the relevant variables to be explored. Responses obtained from these last two questions would provide an insight into the differing approaches taken to conduct an Emergency Management Best Value Review, e.g. revealing how each stakeholder interpreted the ‘Four Cs’ and applied them as well as how they overcame any difficulties.

Each stakeholder was asked “Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value?”. The purpose of this question was to identify whether there are any problems in service provision identified during an Emergency Management Best Value Review but for which Best Value does not present the opportunity to rectify. During the literature review, for example, several key variables were identified which were arguably national issues and as such may have needed to be addressed at a national level, e.g. the service’s legislative base and working boundaries. To ensure this question was answered in the fullest way possible, additional prompt questions were posed, including “How do you know these have not improved?” and “Why have these not improved?”. It was envisaged responses made to these questions would identify concerns held regarding service provision.

As discussed in Chapter Two, undertaking a Best Value Review should be rigorous and detailed and therefore resources must be made available in order to undertake such a process. For this reason, all stakeholders were asked “What resources were used to complete this Review?”. Three supplementary questions were also devised; “Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do?”, “To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the Review?” and “To what extent was the resource detracted from day-to-day service delivery?”. The responses obtained would identify the levels of resources made available for such Reviews, as well as providing an indication as to whether the level of resource available affected the scope of the Review and on-going service delivery during the Review period.

All stakeholders were asked “Has your Best Value Review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate?”. For those stakeholders who answered “yes” they were then asked to describe the Inspectorate’s key findings as well as answer “What were the positive aspects of the audit?”, “What were the negative aspects of the audit?”, “Was the Inspectorate’s report what you expected?” and “If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?”. If a stakeholder indicated their Review had not yet been audited, they were asked when they envisaged auditing would take place. The purpose of such a series of questions was to determine how comprehensively Emergency Management Best Value Reviews had been audited and to see if any feedback regarding identified ‘national’ problems, e.g. the service’s legislative base, had been obtained or was to be subsequently actioned by the Inspectorate. The Best Value Inspectorate is broken down into different regional areas

and it was felt responses received to this question would provide an indication as to how standardised the approach of the entire Best Value Inspectorate was towards auditing Emergency Management Reviews.

Finally, all stakeholders were asked to apply their own experiences of Emergency Management Best Value Reviews to the support model devised during this research and indicate to what extent they agreed/disagreed with it, what they perceived to be its strengths and limitations, to suggest modifications and lastly to indicate how helpful it would have been during their own Review. This initial evaluation of the support model is discussed in Chapter Eight.

In addition to core questions, several others were devised centering on particular themes but worded in such a way to reflect the stakeholder's current perception of Best Value. For those stakeholders who believed their service had improved as a result of the Best Value Review, they were asked "What specific aspects of the Emergency Management service have been improved by Best Value". Responses received to this question were then discussed, measured and quantified in order to determine how the stakeholder knew these aspects of the service had improved. In addition, these stakeholders were also asked "Is it Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or has it been a combination of these?". This was to determine whether Best Value was the only factor in Emergency Management service improvement. Some stakeholders indicated they were unsure whether their Emergency Management service had improved as a result its Best Value Review. They were of this opinion because the Improvement Plan they

had produced at the end of the Review had not yet started to come to fruition. Such stakeholders were asked “To what extent has the Improvement Plan now come to fruition?”. If the response given to this question indicated service improvements were now beginning to emerge, the stakeholder was asked the question “To what extent has Best Value improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these”. In addition, the stakeholder would be asked to quantify these improvements. The perceptions of Best Value held by several interviewees had changed as a result of undergoing an actual Best Value Review. It was important to determine why these perceptions had changed. Such stakeholders were asked to discuss “Why has your perception of Best Value changed?” in order to determine the reason for their change of opinion. For the stakeholder who stated their service had not improved as a result of undertaking the Best Value Review, he was asked “Why do you feel the service has not improved? Is it possible the service could improve in the future as a result of this Best Value Review?”. This question was asked because some of the decisions made as a result of a Best Value Review may have been emotive and therefore not popular. It was important, however, to remain impartial and determine whether long-term improvements could be achieved as a result.

All stakeholders were given the opportunity at the end of the interview to make any additional comments they believed relevant. All questions devised, i.e. core and supplementary, allowed the impact of variables identified during the literature review to be explored. Appendix N contains a full set of follow-up interview questions asked to each individual interviewee.

### Piloting The Follow-Up Interview Questions

As with the postal questionnaire it was essential to pilot the follow-up interview process. The intended aim of this piloting was two-fold; first to refine interviewing techniques and secondly to ensure the questions asked obtained the necessary information (Gill and Johnson, 1997). This process was piloted with one stakeholder identified from the North East of England. The rationale for selecting this stakeholder was heavily influenced by travelling time and financial constraints. The pilot interview was successful and highlighted several strengths of this approach. The questions asked provided the responses and level of detail required for this study. It also allowed interviewing skills to be developed as well as gauge the time needed to complete an interview. No substantial weaknesses were identified and the minor modifications suggested were implemented as appropriate into the interview schedule.

### Follow-Up Interviews

Prior to interviews each stakeholder was sent a personalized letter (Appendix O) explaining the purpose of the interview and the questions to be discussed. The purpose for issuing the questions in advance of the actual interview was so each stakeholder had the time to consider their response and gather together any necessary paperwork (Saunders et al., 2000). Additionally, a request was made to each interviewee to supply copies of reports produced during their Emergency Management Best Value Review so these could be studied in advance of the interview and any necessary clarification sought

during the interview. Also included with the explanatory letter was a copy of the support model, developed earlier in the study. Each stakeholder was asked to give the model their full consideration by applying their own experiences to it and prepare constructive criticism for discussion during the interview.

Six interviews took place between 14 December 2001 and 6 February 2002 as detailed in Appendix P. The data gathered as a result of these interviews was subsequently analysed and the findings are presented in Chapter Six. Constructive feedback on the Review support model, including suggestions as to how it could be improved by taking account of stakeholder experiences of actual Best Value Reviews, are described in Chapter Eight.

The information collected during the interviews was subsequently analysed without using computer software. This decision was taken for several reasons. This part of the research process was implemented using a phenomenological strategy where the data to be collected was not to be used to test hypotheses or to be formally measured, but was instead to obtain a richer source of information than provided by any existing body of theory so as to allow interpretation and understanding of the findings already established. For this reason, the data collected was not to be quantified and measured in order to identify association or causation, but was to be interpreted and criticized to provide an understanding of how and why certain issues prevail when the Best Value Review process is applied to local authority Emergency Management provision. This approach would be used to further support and explain the key findings obtained at the start of this research. Additionally, the amount of data gathered from the six interviewees was



manageable without requiring the aid of a software tool. More importantly, the procedure allowed monitoring to remain as close as possible to the actual qualitative data in order to ensure no information collected was overlooked. However, had a consistent approach (including terminology) been used by local authorities in implementing their Emergency Management Best Value Reviews, then the use of computer software to assist this data analysis may have been more appropriate.

#### Stage Four: Best Value Review Support Model: Final Evaluation

Whilst the follow-up interview process described earlier provided the opportunity to conduct an interim assessment of the support model at the same time as offering an opportunity for triangulation regarding the stakeholder census results, this alone was not a rigorous enough evaluation of the proposed model. For this reason, once the support model had been amended taking account of the comments made by stakeholders in Stage Three, a more comprehensive evaluation was needed. Ideally, the author would have liked to pilot the support model using an action research approach. Dick (1993) described action research as having two aims; action which brings about organizational change and research which aids mutual understanding of both client organization and the research. In the context of this research, an action research approach would involve the author (in the role of researcher) working within one or more Emergency Management Departments during the course of their Best Value Review and implementing the support model. The aim of this would be to measure the effectiveness of the model in terms of it offering a complete diagnosis in the context of the Best Value, identifying the extent to

which it could dovetail within the overall strategies of the local authority and measuring the extent to which the model could build upon insight into factors effecting teams perceived strengths, overcome limitations and respond to various organizational characteristics as perceived by stakeholders. The outcomes of this action research would have been acceptance, rejection or varying levels of appropriate amendment to the support model. However, this action research whilst desirable was not feasible principally because a typical Best Value Review took approximately nine months to complete and this process ideally would have to be repeated in various locations to account for differences such as authority structure, legislation, funding and public perception. Despite these constraints, the author was keen to ensure the support model was evaluated with stakeholders representing all types of local authority in all geographical locations covered by this research. The E.P.S. supported the earlier census and for this reason they were approached once again in its capacity as the professional body representing Emergency Management professionals. In particular, the Society's Local Authority Professional Issues Group was approached, whose terms of reference are shown in Table 5.11. This approach was made for two reasons. First, the membership of the Group was made up of differing levels of local authority Emergency Management professionals who were employed by varying types of authorities (as shown in Table 5.12.) and secondly, the fifth term of reference for the Group clearly stated part of the Group's remit was to identify good practice and support innovation wherever possible.

E.P.S.'s Local Authority Professional Issues Group	
<u>Terms of Reference</u>	
Support For Emergency Planning Professionals In Local Authorities:	
1. To promote the interests of those members of the Society who are employed by local authorities.	
2. To support the professional development and standing of local authority Emergency Planning Officers.	
Forum For Discussion, Information-Sharing And Good Practice:	
3. To act as a focal point for the discussion and development of Emergency Planning issues of specific concern to local authorities, whatever their form.	
4. To raise awareness, promote debate, disseminate information or produce guidance on issues pertaining to local authority Emergency Planners.	
5. To identify good practice and support innovation wherever it is found and promote examples of these amongst Emergency Planning practitioners and produce guidance for the profession as necessary.	
Relationship To The Society Council:	
6. To provide the Society's Council with a source of advice on issues affecting local authorities.	
7. To make regular reports on the group's activities to the Vice Chair (Professional Issues) and the Society's Council, and make recommendations to the Council for action.	
Relationship Of Local Authorities To Government:	
8. To represent issues of concern to the central government lead department and ensure that Society members have a voice in the on-going development of the legal and practical framework within which local authority Emergency Planners operate.	
Relationship Of Local Authorities To Other Agencies:	
9. To liaise with other non-Society groups which influence the development of local authority Emergency Planning and seek to promote common agendas.	
(Source: <a href="http://www.emergplansoc.org.uk">www.emergplansoc.org.uk</a> , 2002)	

Table 5.11.: E.P.S.'s Local Authority Professional Issues Group Terms of Reference

<u>Membership Of The E.P.S.'s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group</u>		
<u>Type of Local Authority:</u>	<u>Geographical Location:</u>	<u>Number Of Group Members:</u>
Single Tier	England	6
Two Tier	England	11
Single Tier	Wales	1
Single Tier	Scotland	2

Table 5.12.: Membership Of The E.P.S.'s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group

The Chair was approached to determine whether the Group would be willing to participate in evaluating this Review support model. The Chair explained whilst the Group would be willing to undertake such an evaluation exercise because of the potential benefits it would offer to the Emergency Management service, he did stress the Group's current workload was extensive owing to their on-going involvement in a number of high profile national initiatives and this could potentially have an impact upon response. The previous evaluation exercise undertaken as part of the follow-up interview process described earlier did not consider the substantive content of the model with the key drivers and barriers of Best Value implementation as perceived from the stakeholder census. From this second evaluation process, an attempt was made to gauge, in greater depth, the perceptions of service professionals in relation to the usefulness of this model in measuring Best Value in Emergency Management. Additionally, it was necessary to determine to what extent these professionals believed those significant associations identified from the earlier hypothesis testing were accounted for in the support model. Ideally, it would have been helpful to have attended a Group meeting in order to present

the model, provide any clarification required by Group members and then ask a series of questions analyzing and evaluating the value of the support model to the Group and their responses be recorded for future analysis. Instead, the Group Chair agreed that if the Best Value support model and an accompanying questionnaire was produced he would ensure it was explained and distributed by himself at their next meeting. A questionnaire was constructed which not only would require Group members to evaluate the model but which also provided those members with the necessary background information to know why and how the model was developed.

#### Questionnaire Development:

From the brief provided by the E.P.S., an appropriate questionnaire was developed building upon the good practice identified during the production of the original census. Careful consideration was given to the type of data required in order to evaluate the Value Review support model. In order for Local Authority Professional Issues Group members to evaluate the model, a series of questions were developed to allow respondents to indicate their perceptions, i.e. this would result in qualitative data being collected. The membership of the Group was made up of service professionals representing different types of authority structure from differing geographical locations in the U.K.. For this reason, these Group members could provide a diverse range of perceptions thereby ensuring a balanced outcome is achieved. A questionnaire was drafted by giving careful consideration to the four inter-related factors of focus,

phraseology, form of response, sequencing and overall presentation, an approach adopted during the development of the earlier census.

### Question Focus

The purpose of this questionnaire was to determine whether service professionals considered the support model would achieve its aim of assisting local authorities in measuring Best Value within Emergency Management. In addition, the questions also encompassed those significant associations identified earlier following hypotheses testing. Careful attention was paid throughout the development of the questionnaire to ensure the focus of the questions asked did not stray from the issue of measuring Best Value in the service. The author was keen to ensure that as access to Group members time was limited none was wasted by asking irrelevant questions.

### Question Phraseology

Wording of questions was essential in ensuring as high a response rate as possible from Group members. Questions were kept as clear and concise without suggesting any bias towards a particular type of response. A mixture of multiple choice and open-ended questions were asked to make the questionnaire as easy as possible for Group members to complete whilst not detracting from the quality of their response. Multiple choice questions allowed Group members to answer quickly whilst open-ended questions provided them with the opportunity to state the rationale for their perception hence

provide a detailed insight to support the findings from the Emergency Management stakeholder census and the components of the Best Value Review support model. Group members, for example, are informed “That earlier research found that Emergency Management stakeholders perceived six factors would act as constraints to achieving an effective Emergency Management Best Value Review”. These six factors are then listed and Group members are asked to consider whether the support model “Will help to overcome these constraints”, “Will help in part to overcome these constraints”, “Will not help to overcome these constraints”, are “Uncertain if the model will help to overcome these constraints”. Once a Group member selected the most appropriate multiple choice option they were then asked to “Add comments where appropriate in support of your response”, i.e. they were given the opportunity to detail their rationale.

#### The Form of Response

The author was keen to ensure responses were recorded as effectively as possible so that strength of feeling could subsequently be interpreted. For this reason, nominal and Likert scales were incorporated into the questionnaire. Nominal scales were used to ‘measure’ between two or more categories with no arithmetic value. For example, the questions “I am employed by a – Shire County, Shire District/Borough, Unitary Authority, London Borough, Metropolitan Borough, Fire and Civil Defence Authority, Combined Fire Authority”, “My local authority is located in – England, Scotland, Wales” and “The local authority(ies) I work for – receives Civil Defence Grant funding, does not receive Civil Defence Grant funding” assist in profiling the Group member. By contrast, Likert scales assisted in gauging the strength of Group member feeling towards issues. For example,

when asked the question “To what extent do you believe it is possible for this model to be implemented as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review in your own local authority regardless of – Civil Defence Grant status, making an in-house financial contribution towards the service, perceived consistency of service delivery across the UK, perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the UK, local authority structure (i.e. Single or Two Tier), perception of service integration into authority’s corporate aims and objectives, perceived Chief Officer support for service, level of support for national Emergency Management Inspectorate, level of support for national performance indicators, level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs, level of confidence in community awareness of the service, belief Emergency Plans would be effective if understood by public” Group members are asked to select from the most appropriate response, i.e. “Yes, implementation is possible”, “Implementation possible with major revision”, “No, implementation is not possible” and “Uncertain”.

#### Question Sequencing and Presentation

The questionnaire contained two parts. Part One presented the Review support model for evaluation and Part Two the questions Group members were required to answer in order to evaluate the model. The questions in Part Two were grouped into themes as shown in Table 5.13. to ensure the questionnaire flowed without influencing Group members to reply to questions with particular responses (Gill and Johnson, 1997).



Grouping Themes – Prototype Evaluation Questionnaire:

- Potential constraints for Emergency Management Best Value Reviews;
- Potential benefits of Emergency Management Best Value Reviews;
- Application of ‘Cs’;
- Issues influencing current and future Emergency Management delivery;
- Potential implementation of prototype;
- Perceived strengths and limitations of prototype.

Table 5.13.: Grouping Themes – Prototype Evaluation Questionnaire

Finally, as with the earlier census, careful consideration was given to overall presentation to ensure it was as concise and reader-friendly as possible. The questionnaire was given a title from which Group members could gain an understanding of its remit, i.e.

“Evaluation Of A Prototype Model Designed To Facilitate The Implementation Of An Emergency Management Best Value Review”. In addition, the researcher’s name and associated university were also clearly acknowledged. A concise explanation of the background to the support model’s development was presented along with a rationale for seeking the views of the membership of the E.P.S.’s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group. The format of the questionnaire was explained, “... by considering the model enclosed in Part One of this document and then completing the questions presented in Part Two”. In Part One of the questionnaire the support model and guidance notes for its usage were detailed to ensure Group members had the correct mindset in which to then go on and evaluate the model. Completion instructions were clearly stated where appropriate throughout the various sections of the questionnaire assisting the

Group member as much as possible. To reflect the importance of this evaluation process upon the entire research, the questionnaire was piloted (Howard and Sharp, 1992).

### Questionnaire Piloting

The questionnaire was piloted with an experienced Emergency Management professional who had very little first-hand working knowledge of applying Best Value to their service.

The response received from the pilot process was intended to indicate whether the questionnaire was appropriate for obtaining reliable and valid results (Bell, 1993).

Telephone contact was made with the pilot respondent to initially determine whether they would be willing to participate in this process. The pilot respondent agreed to participate and a copy of the questionnaire was issued for their completion within two weeks. A face-to-face meeting was then held to obtain constructive feedback. The pilot respondent stated very positively that despite no operational experience of Best Value, the questionnaire had been clear to understand, easy to complete (albeit some questions required considerable thought) and flowed naturally. Criticisms were made regarding the presentation of the questionnaire and the space set aside for the responses to open-ended questions. As a direct result of the lessons learnt during the piloting of the census, this latest questionnaire required little modification.

Unlike the census, it was decided not to seek official endorsement for the Best Value Review support model evaluation questionnaire. Whilst official endorsement had played a key part in obtaining such high a response rate previously, it was not considered

essential for the model's evaluation as the E.P.S. were one of those official bodies who endorsed the earlier census. During discussions with the Chair of the Society's Local Authorities Professional Issues Group regarding support model evaluation, the Chair was keen to stress that an explicit part of the Group's remit was to try and identify best practice within the field of local authority Emergency Management, therefore no additional official endorsement was sought. However, as with the census, the importance of addressing ethical issues so as to ensure data received was kept confidential and respondent's identities remained anonymous was recognized (Saunders et al., 2000).

### The Final Questionnaire

A copy of the final questionnaire is contained in Appendix Q. The final questionnaire was structured into three sections – “Background”, “Part One: The Support Model” and “Part Two: Evaluation Of The Best Value Review Support Model”. Each section will now be discussed in detail.

#### Background:

The purpose of this part of the questionnaire was to explain clearly to Group members why and how the support model had been developed. Reference was also made to how the model had previously been evaluated (on a preliminary basis) and why a more rigorous evaluation was now needed. Group members were assured any responses made

would be kept confidential and a summary report of the findings would be prepared for Group members in due course.

#### Part One: The Best Value Review Support Model:

This part of the questionnaire initially provided Group members with guidance as to how the support model should be used by a local authority undertaking an Emergency Management Best Value Review before then going on to present all three tiers of the model, i.e. “Top-tier: The Remit Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service”, “Middle-tier: Applying Best Value Generically To The Local Authority Emergency Management Service” and the five explanatory diagrams making up the “Bottom-tier: Applying Best Value To The Specific Components Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service”.

#### Part Two: Evaluation Of The Best Value Review Support Model:

The purpose of this part of the questionnaire was to develop a profile of the responding Group member and then to gauge their perception of the support model. A profile of the Group member was possible by analysing the first three questions, i.e. the type of local authority employed by, geographical location and the Civil Defence Grant status of authority. This profile information was important for subsequent analysis of perception information. Does Civil Defence Grant status, for example, influence perception of the support model? Questions four through to eleven focused specifically upon the Best Value Review model presented to the Group member in Part One of the questionnaire.

The purpose of these questions were to gauge Group members level of support for the model:

- Question Four brought to the attention of Group members this research had previously found six factors were perceived by service stakeholders as potentially constraining the achievement of effective Emergency Management Best Value Reviews. The six factors were then clearly displayed and Group members were asked to indicate to what extent the model could help Best Value Review teams overcome these constraints, i.e. “Yes, will help”, “Will help in part”, “No, will not help” or “Uncertain. Group members were asked to add comments to support their selection.
- The fifth question highlighted the five benefits of undergoing an Emergency Management Best Value Review as perceived by stakeholders who participated in the earlier census. These benefits were listed and Group members were asked to indicate to what extent the support model would assist in achieving those benefits, i.e. “Yes, will help”, “Will help in part”, “No, will not help” or “Uncertain”. As with the previous question, Group members were given the opportunity to make comments to support their perception. This question was devised to incorporate issues of triangulation.
- The next question related to the ‘Cs’ of Best Value. Group members were asked to indicate to what extent they believed the support model addressed the application of each of the ‘Cs’ to Emergency Management given these defined the

purpose of a Best Value Review, i.e. “Yes, it addresses”, “No, it does not address” or “Uncertain”. Each ‘C’ was considered individually and if any Group member believed the model did not address, or was uncertain, they were asked to detail which areas they considered to be missing. The purpose of this question was to discover how comprehensive the support model was perceived to be.

- The seventh question asked Group members to consider a series of issues that appeared, on the basis of testing carried out on data collected at the start of this research, to influence how an Emergency Management service was delivered and could be delivered in the future. Group members were asked to consider each issue in isolation and indicate whether they “Would expect this to be an influencing issue”, “Would not expect this to be an influencing issue” or express their “Uncertainty”. This was to discover whether any of the issues identified earlier came as a surprise to Group members or were as expected, i.e. triangulation of results from the stakeholder census.
- Question Eight asked members whether they considered the support model could be implemented as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review regardless of those factors identified as influencing the services current and future delivery. By asking Group members to consider each issue and then indicate whether the support model could be implemented in their authority as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review, i.e. “Yes, implementation is possible”, “Implementation is possible with major revision”, “No, implementation

is not possible” or “Uncertain (whether implementation is possible)”, it was possible to elicit respondents assessments of the complexity of the Best Value process within Emergency Management and the perceived extent to which the proposed model could assist in this process in-line with the phenomenological research strategy. Responses to this question would indicate whether the original data upon which the support model was developed was still relevant, i.e. triangulation with respect to whether the original drivers and barriers perceived by stakeholders remained valid. Group members who felt that Best Value Review support model implementation was not possible in their local authority were asked to explain why they held this view.

- Question Nine asked Group members to identify the perceived strengths of the support model whilst Question Ten asked them to identify its limitations. In addition, members were asked to detail how their perceived limitations could be overcome thereby assisting the model’s future refinement.
- The final question asked members to consider to what extent the support model improved upon available Best Value in Emergency Management documentation, i.e. “Greatly improves”, “Improves”, “Uncertain” or “Does not improve”. The responses to this question could enable a judgement to be made about how valuable the Best Value Review support model would be for local authorities.

Finally, all Group members were given the opportunity to make any additional comments they considered relevant. This followed the phenomenological research philosophy

whereby the comments made in relation to the proposed model were based on members work experiences as Emergency Management professionals who understood the complexities of local government, the service and Best Value and therefore could critique in terms of the model's perceived completeness, practicability and the relevance to its substantive content.

#### Questionnaire Distribution:

Nineteen questionnaires were distributed, along with stamped addressed return envelopes, to the Local Authorities Professional Issues Group on 10 February 2003 and an official completion deadline date for returning completed questionnaires was given as 7 March 2003.

From the nineteen questionnaires distributed, eleven completed questionnaires were returned. Table 5.14. details the composition of Group Members who returned questionnaires according to their type of authority and geographical location. As a 47% response rate was achieved with participating respondents representing all types of local authority structure in England, Scotland and Wales, no follow-up action was taken to seek comments from non-respondents.



Composition Of Group Members Returning Questionnaires

<u>Type Of Local Authority:</u>	<u>Receives Civil Defence Grant:</u>	<u>Does Not Receive Civil Defence Grant:</u>
English Two Tier	6 responses	1 response
English Single Tier	2 response	
Welsh Unitary	1 response	
Scottish Unitary		1 response

Table 5.14.: Composition Of Group Members Returning Questionnaires

The information received in the completed questionnaires was part coded so it could be inputted to an Excel database for subsequent analysis relating to specific questions. The findings from these evaluation questionnaires are presented in Chapter Eight alongside the subsequent changes made to the Review support model.

## **CHAPTER SIX – KEY FINDINGS FROM THE CENSUS OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STAKEHOLDERS**

### Introduction:

This chapter presents the results obtained from the census of Emergency Management stakeholders regarding their perception of Emergency Management and the implementation of a Best Value Review with respect to their provision. Results from the census will be presented and discussed first before moving on to the perceptions of a number of Best Value practitioners obtained during the series of follow-up one-to-one interviews.

The results to be presented will consist initially of a uni-variate analysis covering eleven major areas:

- current approach to Emergency Management delivery
- initial reaction to Best Value
- consistency of Emergency Management service delivery
- working boundaries
- legislation
- funding
- national monitoring of Emergency Management services
- perceived public awareness and understanding of Emergency Management service

- perceived benefits of Best Value in Emergency Management
- perceived constraints in adopting Best Value in Emergency Management
- additional comments

Following this, the results relating to the five key hypotheses will be presented. The five hypotheses focussed upon the influences of funding, legislation, service monitoring, organisational culture and public perception upon the Emergency Management service.

The final part of the chapter will focus upon the qualitative information obtained from the six follow-up interviews.

#### Distribution Of The Census Responses:

Table 6.1. summarises the distribution of the questionnaire, the responses received and the actual number of questionnaires used for analysis. The rationale for discarding 52 of the questionnaires (i.e. 8% of the responses) was described earlier in the research methodology.

Questionnaires Distributed And Suitable For Data Analysis	
Total Number Of Questionnaires Distributed	1749
Total Number Of Completed Questionnaires Returned	630
Number of Questionnaires Which Needed To Be Discarded After Data Cleansing (independence could not be guaranteed)	52
Total Number Of Questionnaires Suitable For Data Analysis	578

Table 6.1.: Questionnaires Distributed And Suitable For Data Analysis

The composition of the 578 responses used for analysis is shown in detail in Figure 6.1.

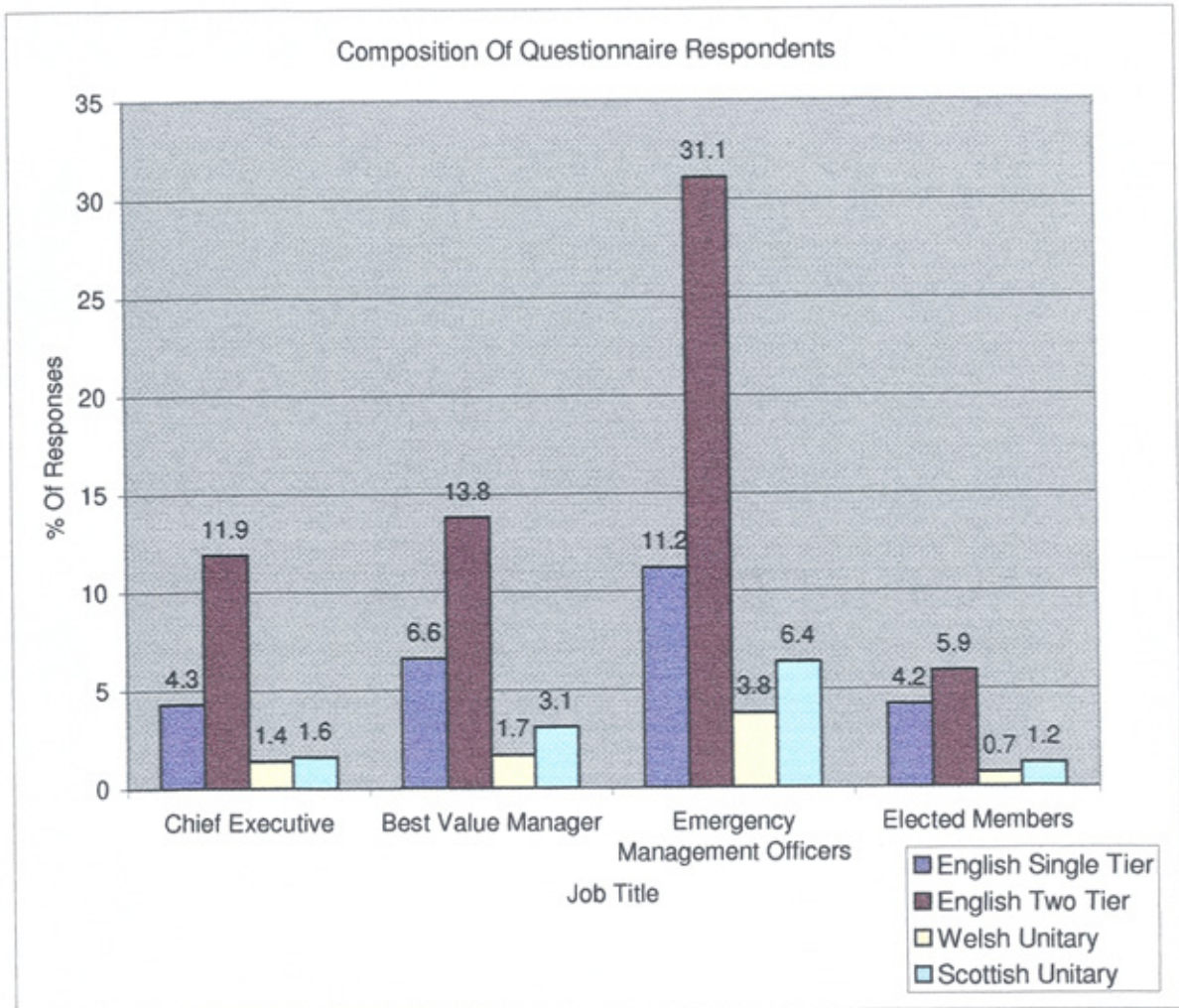


Figure 6.1.: Composition Of Questionnaire Respondents

Table 5.6. and the accompanying narrative presented and discussed in detail the composition of the representative sample of Emergency Management stakeholders who responded to the survey questionnaire. The actual findings obtained from these questionnaires will now be discussed.

### Current Approach To Emergency Management Delivery:

From the returns provided, it was interesting to note 62% of respondents were from local authorities which provided an Emergency Management service via an in-house designated Emergency Management Officer(s) compared with 24% who provided the service via an Emergency Management Officer(s) attached to another authority and 14% who provided the service by one of a range of ‘other’ means as shown in Table 6.2.

#### ‘Other’ Types of Emergency Management Service Delivery

- Service Level Agreement e.g. with Combined Fire Authority, Shire County Council, Fire and Civil Defence Authority
- Designated Emergency Management Office at County Council level with support from District Council personnel (i.e. seconded x days per week per month)
- Emergency Management Officer jointly funded between two Shire District Councils
- Purchase Emergency Management advice from a retired Emergency Management Officer
- Joint arrangement with several other Unitary authorities
- Combination of in-house Emergency Management Officers and joint arrangements with neighbouring local authorities

Table 6.2.: ‘Other’ Types Of Emergency Management Service Delivery

Regardless of the method of service provision, it was interesting to note there was no consistency, in terms of the person holding the position of “reporting line manager” for the service. Responses to the question “Please give the job title of your Emergency

Management Officer(s) line manager within your local authority” included Secretary and Solicitor (or equivalent), Director of Leisure, Director of Operations, Director of Social Services, Chief Executive (or equivalent), Chief Fire Officer, Director of Environmental Services (or equivalent), Trading Standards Officer, Deputy Chief Executive, Risk Manager, Planning Officer, Director of Personnel, Head of Property, Head of Community Safety and Head of Corporate Policy. This lack of consistency could perhaps be explained by the absence of central government guidance as to where an Emergency Management service should sit within an individual local authority.

It was found that 59% of respondents believed Elected Members in their authority were supportive of the Emergency Management service when required (i.e. when a decision needed to be made relating to a specific emergency) and 48% of respondents believed the Chief Officers in their authority were also supportive of the service when required. Just under half (48%) of respondents believed Emergency Management to be a service that was fully integrated into the corporate aims and objectives of their local authority and 54% believed they provided an Emergency Management service reflecting the needs of the local community. However, several respondents did concede they had never canvassed their community about the Emergency Management service and therefore perhaps did not feel able to address this issue accurately. Only 37% of respondents felt confident their local community was aware its local authority provided an Emergency Management service. One respondent who was uncertain whether their local community was aware of the Emergency Management service stated *“To an extent – many in the*

*community have no idea what services local authorities provides – I think this is generally the case everywhere”.*

#### Initial Reaction To Best Value:

All respondents were aware of Best Value and the majority believed they clearly understood its principles. Eighty one per cent of respondents believed it was necessary for local government to change its approach to decision making and 67% believed Best Value would enhance a local authority's decision making. Similarly, 88% of respondents believed it was necessary for local government to change its approach to general service delivery and 69% believed implementing Best Value would enhance local government's general service delivery. As a caveat to this, several respondents did suggest Best Value would only help in the achievements of these improvements if applied as part of central government's wider modernisation programme, including local authority political reform. The majority of respondents believed Best Value radically differed from C.C.T. with responses including:

- *It allows quality as well as cost to be considered. It is also more comprehensive and pervasive affecting all services.*
- *Competition is still an important element of Best Value. More emphasis needs to be placed on council service areas which have never been exposed to competition rather than the easy option of continuing with more 'blue collar' competition only.*



- *It is an approach which should be seen as part of a continually improving organisation and not something additional/separate – as C.C.T. was.*
- *Not just about provision of the lowest price. Recognised the complexity of decisions which have to be made when service provision is under scrutiny.*
- *Best Value should be seen as more than an accounting exercise. Cheapest is not necessarily the best. Quality and effectiveness must be at the forefront.*

However, some respondents believed Best Value did not differ radically from C.C.T.

because:

- *The emphasis on procurement may mean C.C.T. by another name.*
- *In view of pressure to avoid a status quo option, there is a drive for change regardless and too much emphasis on service provision by uneducated outside bodies – business or other local authorities outside delivery boundary.*
- *All these initiatives cost more money than they save at the end of the day, although somebody has obviously found public bodies such as local authorities waste an awful lot of money.*
- *Still means privatization of public services. Motive profit rather than service.*
- *It appears to be change for change's sake – and another economic burden on over stretched officers and councilors.*

Regardless of their view of Best Value compared with C.C.T., many respondents were uncertain whether their authority had the capacity to deliver Best Value within existing

resources. However, several respondents did believe they had the capacity with responses including:

- *All authorities must provide services under Best Value in a cost effective/conscious way. Best Value will be completely discredited if councils plead for increases in resources or fail to deliver decent levels of service on the basis of lack of money.*
- *If Best Value equals continuous improvement there is always scope for doing things better.*
- *Best Value is the best that can be done with available resources, one must do the best with what you've got!*
- *To allocate additional resources to Best Value is to miss the point. It is not an additional initiative but about how we do things – our approach.*

In contrast, several respondents did not believe they had the appropriate resource capacity making comments such as:

- *Our pilot work internally on revenues and benefits has demonstrated a massive resource requirement to undertake the work and to improve service levels to most agreed target costs to date and nine extra revenues and benefits employees to date plus brought in project management support – may not be sustainable in other areas.*
- *The bureaucratic structure and inspection overload will require substantial additional time and resources, will in national terms be very costly and is in itself the very antithesis of Best Value.*

- *Very resource intensive for a small rural authority with a population of 35,000.  
May compromise ability to delivery key services effectively.*
- *More human resources will be required unless the breadth of service provided is  
to diminish.*

Sixty two per cent of respondents believed local authority Emergency Management could be improved by the implementation of Best Value and, at the time of the survey, 57% believed their service was already working towards Best Value. However, the vast majority of respondents were unable at this point of time to state in which year their Emergency Management service would be subjected to a Best Value Review.

Respondents indicated they would be seeking advice from a wide range of organisations when applying Best Value to Emergency Management as shown in Table 6.3. Perhaps encouragingly, the majority of respondents also indicated they would be seeking advice from several organisations when applying Best Value rather than from a single source.

<u>Organisations From Whom Advice Will Be Sought</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Office/Scottish Executive/National Assembly For Wales</li> <li>• Scottish Executive</li> <li>• IDeA/Synaid</li> <li>• L.G.A. and W.L.G.A.</li> <li>• CoSLA</li> <li>• Audit Commission/Accounts Commission and external auditors</li> <li>• E.P.S.</li> <li>• SoLACE</li> <li>• Other local authorities including parish councils</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Health authority</li> <li>• Military</li> <li>• Utilities</li> <li>• Business Continuity Institute</li> <li>• Voluntary organizations</li> <li>• Internal performance unit</li> <li>• Regional government office</li> </ul>

Table 6.3.: Organisations From Whom Advice Will Be Sought

#### Consistency Of Emergency Management Service Delivery:

The vast majority of respondents believed there was no consistency in the delivery of Emergency Management services within England, Scotland and Wales, despite more than three quarters of respondents believing emergency arrangements (between authorities) should be capable of dovetailing together regardless of differences in national and local laws or customs. Whilst the majority of respondents (86 %) believed there should be

consistency in service delivery regardless of location, there was little support for a national stand-alone Emergency Planning Unit to replace all existing local authority Emergency Planning Units. One respondent stated *“This has the potential to be a major waste of money and a poor service. 99.9% of emergencies are local”*. By contrast, there was greater support for the creation of a national Emergency Planning Unit to support and underpin the work of their existing local authority Units rather than as a complete replacement.

#### Working Boundaries:

The issue of working boundaries was considered in the questionnaire and it was found that 68% of respondents wanted the Emergency Management service to continue being delivered in accordance with existing boundaries whilst 19% wanted wider regional boundaries to be used. It is interesting to note from those respondents who believe Emergency Management should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries that many worked within English Two Tier local authorities. One respondent who strongly agreed the service should continue to be delivered in accordance with current administrative boundaries stressed *“so long as they coincide with the emergency services”*. By contrast, another respondent was uncertain as to the value of wider regional boundaries because:

*Wide strategic control is not necessarily better than a cross border memoranda of understanding. A regional basis is only serviceable if there is an accurate*

*assessment of the importance of local problems – this requires good local knowledge.*

Several other respondents felt wider regional boundaries would mean the Emergency Management service “*would be too remote*” whilst others believed such an approach could work “*if Police Force boundaries (were used) – but still remained a local authority service close to Chief Executives and local authority services*”.

#### Legislation:

Just under half (48%) of respondents believed Best Value could only be achieved in Emergency Management if new civil protection legislation was introduced placing a statutory duty upon all local authorities. For example, one respondent stated “*we would like to see legislation to tidy up issues such as coastal oil pollution and require (Shire) Districts to be proactive*”. This compares with 29% of the survey respondents who did not believe new legislation was necessary to achieve Best Value. One respondent, for example, who stated no such legislation was necessary in order to achieve Best Value conceded that he “*accepted there are difficulties for some without it (the legislation)*”.

#### Funding:

The issue of funding was explored in the questionnaire. Three options for future funding of the local authority Emergency Management service were identified:

- solely by specific central government grant;
- solely by local authority; or
- through a combination of specific central government grant and local authority contribution

The overall findings are shown in Figure 6.2.

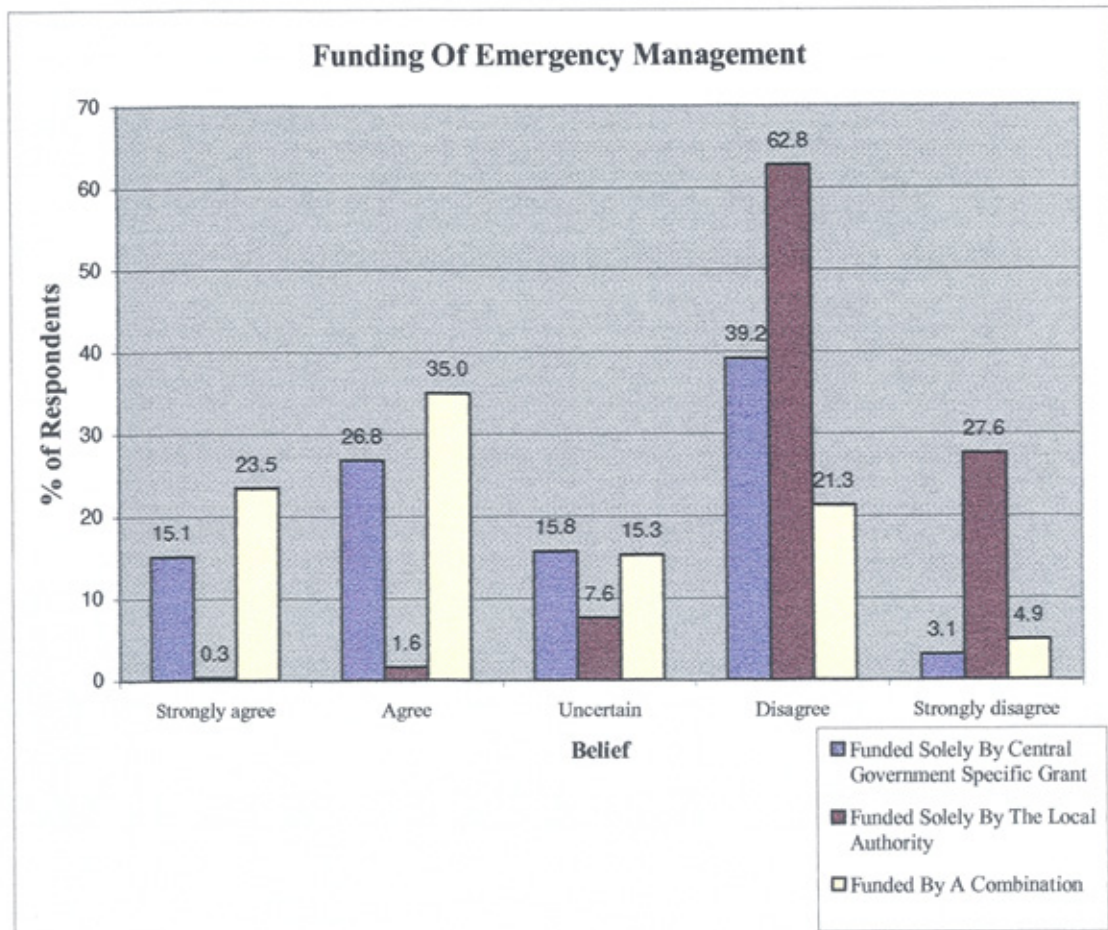


Figure 6.2.: Funding Of Emergency Management

It is interesting the majority of respondents (90%) are opposed to Emergency Management being funded solely by local authorities. Instead, the majority of

respondents indicated they would prefer the service to be funded by a combination of specific central government grant and local authority funding. However, one respondent who disagreed with this approach stated “*others (organizations) should also contribute e.g. health authorities, businesses*”.

At the time of the survey, the national allocation of Civil Defence Grant in England and Wales was £14.3 million<sup>1</sup> and the Scottish equivalent was £2.7 million<sup>2</sup>. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they believed the level of central government specific grant for Emergency Management was sufficient for local authorities to provide an effective service and whether the money was allocated efficiently to local authorities. The findings are shown in Figure 6.3.

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<sup>1</sup> Despite making direct contact with the Cabinet Office no exact figure could be identified. The figure of £14.3 million is an approximation provided by the E.P.S.’s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group.

<sup>2</sup> The figure of £2.7 million comprises of approximately £1.9 million to local authorities (32 local authorities received a core £50,000 each plus an additional amount calculated on the basis of population). The remaining £800,000 was distributed to Fire and Police. This figure was provided as a result of making direct contact with the Head of Emergency Planning in the Scottish Executive.



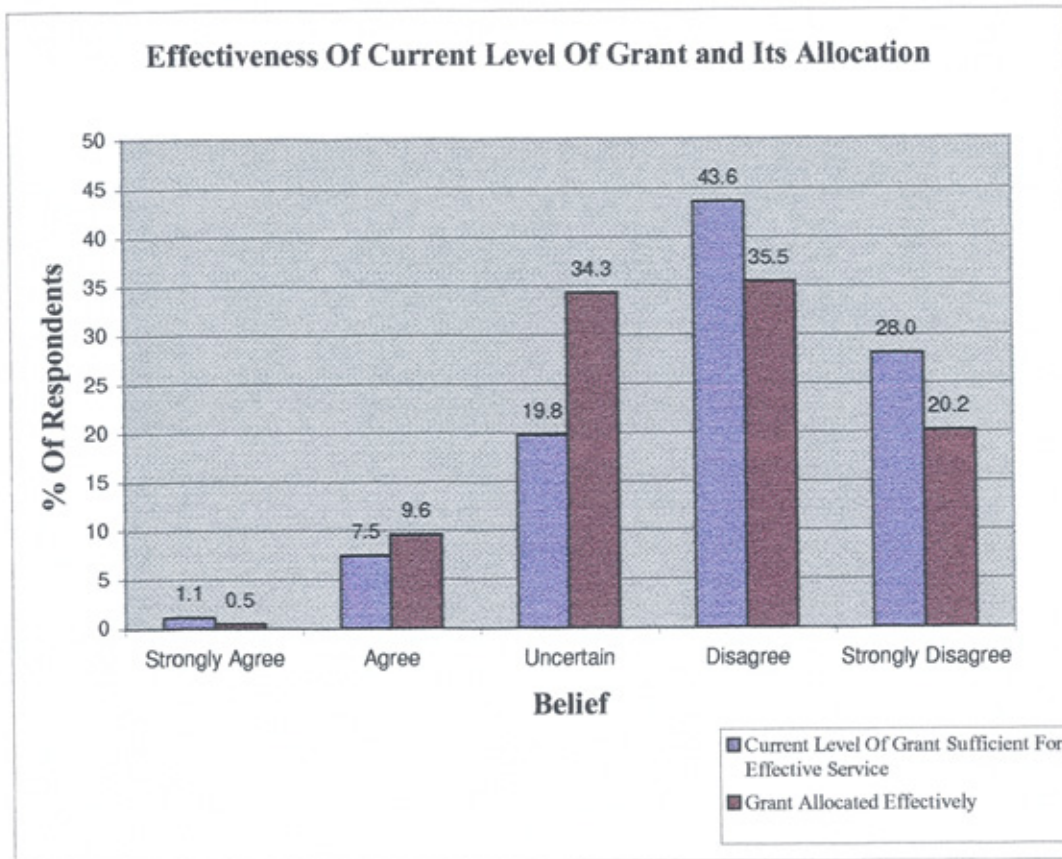


Figure 6.3.: Effectiveness Of Current Level Of Grant And Its Allocation

Figure 6.3. shows the majority of respondents (72%) did not believe the level of Civil Defence Grant was sufficient enough to provide an effective local authority Emergency Management service and this issue was compounded as it was believed the Grant was not allocated effectively to local authorities. This negativity towards the effectiveness of grant value and method of the allocation is perhaps not surprising and indeed mirrors the many comments made by the E.P.S. (Ward, November 2000) and the L.G.A. (Sidaway, February 1999) over recent years. However, a more thought provoking finding is that 45% of respondents believed the Civil Defence Grant allocation formula should arise from a risk/ benefit analysis. This finding in itself is interesting because the current

central government procedure for distributing Civil Defence Grant has been criticized consistently as not appearing to be based upon any pre-determined criteria (Cunningham, March 2002). One respondent who was uncertain about such an approach to the allocation of funding stated *“it depends upon the risk/benefit analysis criteria, also just because an area has not suffered a disaster does not mean that it won’t”*. Similarly, another respondent who disagreed with the risk/benefit analysis approach commented *“I would agree if I were confident in who was doing the analysis, their methods and criteria. However, my experiences ... give me serious doubts. I don’t like these sorts of decisions done by ignorant accountants”*. It is interesting to note nearly 60% of respondents disagreed with the statement “external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in Emergency Management provision in the future” with one respondent stating *“it could be useful but may raise concerns about unethical influences or pressures on nature of responsibilities in plans that may involve a sponsor”*.

#### National Monitoring Of Emergency Management Service:

Service monitoring issues including the creation of a national Emergency Management Inspectorate and the application of national performance indicators were explored in the survey. Respondents were asked to state whether they believed a national Emergency Management Inspectorate would raise service standards and ensure good practice was disseminated to all local authorities. Additionally, respondents were also asked to state whether they believed national Emergency Management performance indicators would be a useful tool for helping to raise service standards. The findings are shown in Figure 6.4.

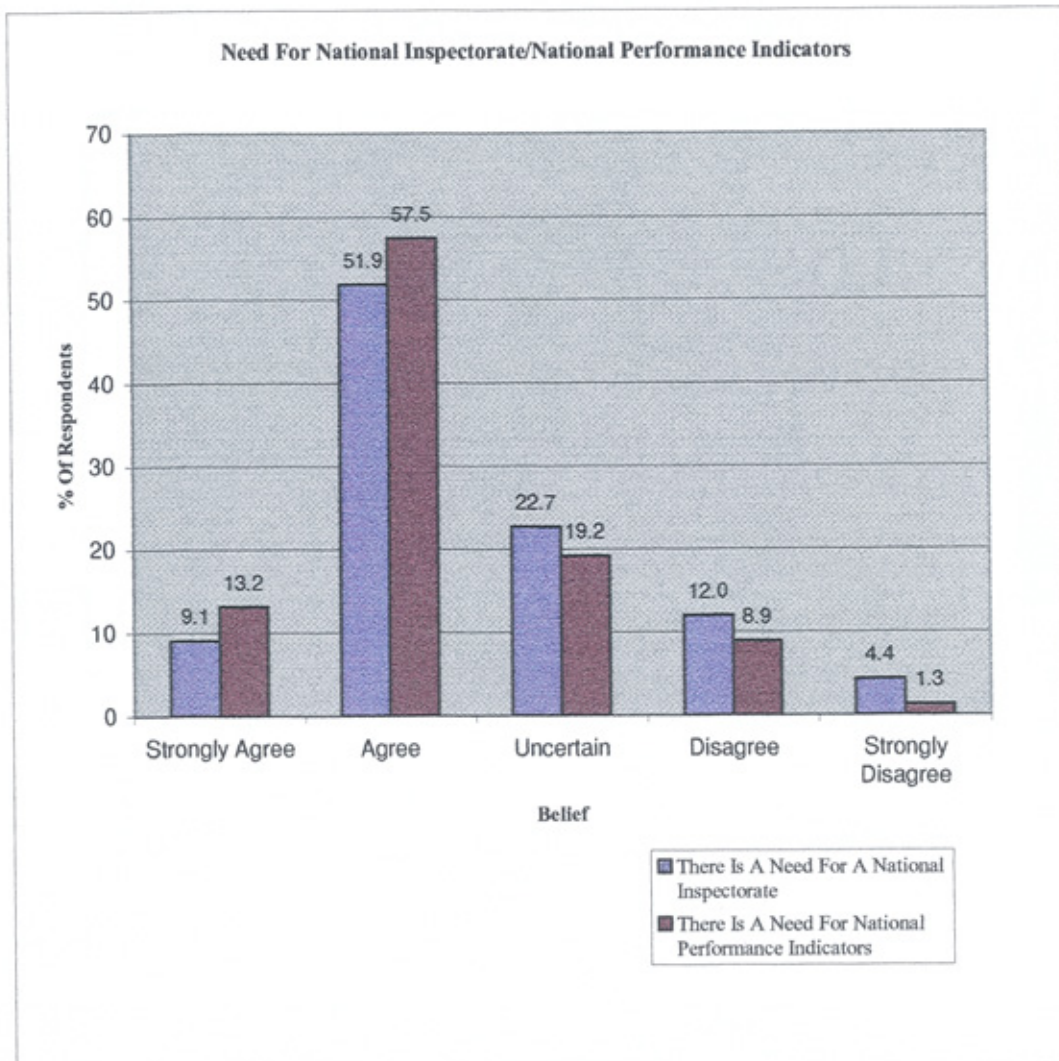


Figure 6.4.: Need For National Inspectorate/National Performance Indicators

The majority of respondents agreed they believed both a national Emergency Management Inspectorate and national performance indicators were needed in order to help to raise the standard of the service. One respondent who agreed with the need for a national Inspectorate said *“but only where those so employed had credible, verifiable skills and knowledge of appropriate local authority Emergency Management requirements”*. A more cautious respondent who was uncertain as to the worth of such

an Inspectorate stated *“it depends on the terms of reference and what relationship any inspectorate has with local government”*. Another respondent commented national performance indicators can only be an integral part in raising the service’s standard *“so long as they are carefully defined, assessed and are relevant”*. In addition, the vast majority of respondents also believed Emergency Management was a service that must be delivered by local authority personnel, including one who stated *“I do not agree it can be done any other way due to lack of diverse knowledge, experience, skills and resources”*. However, a minority of respondents (14%) disagreed with this and stated the service could be delivered by other providers such as any of the uniformed emergency services, private sector contractors/professionals, the voluntary sector, the Environment Agency, the military or through the creation of a Regional Government Unit.

#### Public Awareness And Understanding Of Emergency Management Service:

Public understanding of Emergency Management was considered within the census. Fifty eight per cent of respondents the public needed to have an input into pre-planning for emergencies. Respondents in support of this belief promoted opinion such as *“(the public) are a source of valuable information”* and *“they are paying for it (the service)”*. One respondent did believe the public should have an input but *“only for plans that require action by the community, e.g. evacuation”*. Sixty two per cent of respondents believed the public should have a role to play in responding to an emergency, e.g. *“self-help is an integral part of Emergency Management”*. Several respondents who believed the public should have a role to play in response did also voice caution, e.g. *“providing*



they have been professionally briefed” and “(in some instances it) may not always be appropriate”. One respondent who disagreed and stated the public should not have a role to play in response, believed responses should be “left to the emergency services and local authority teams”. Respondents also considered whether Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public and that these plans be made available as public documents. The findings are detailed in Figure 6.5.

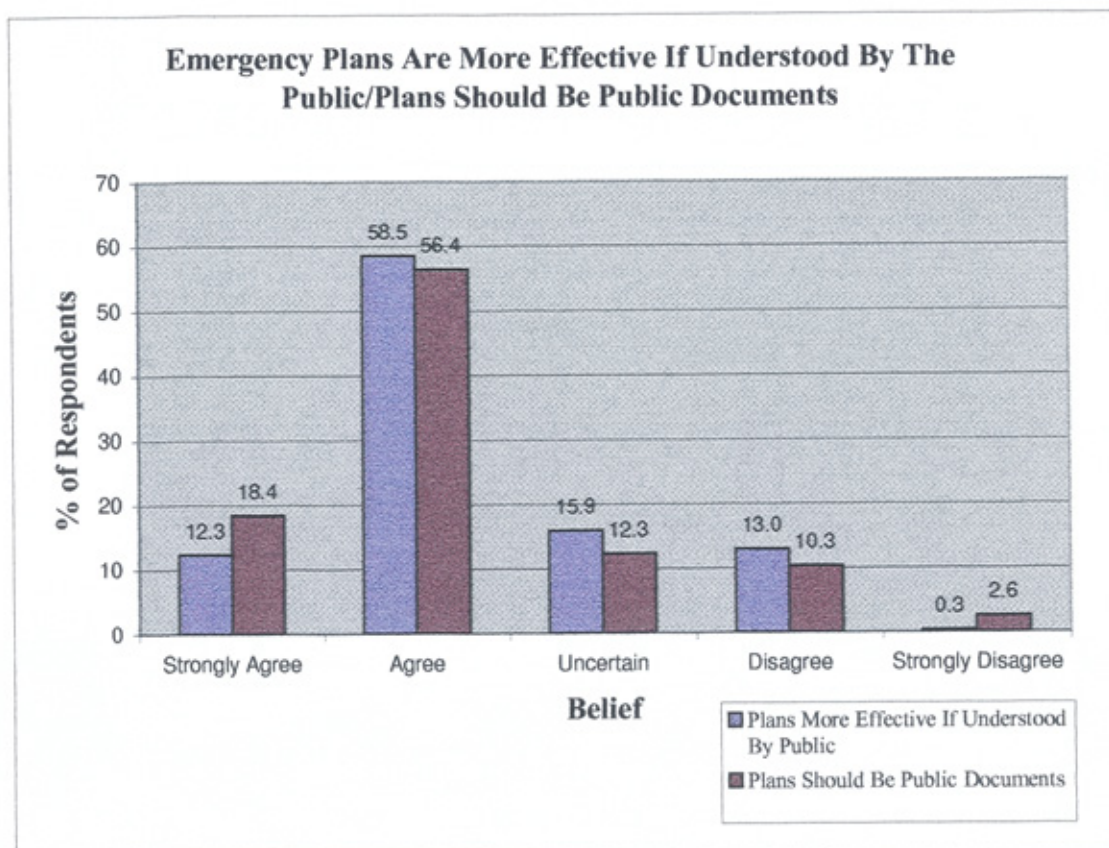


Figure 6.5.: Emergency Plans Are More Effective If Understood By The Public/Plans Should Be Public Documents

The majority of respondents (71%) believed Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public and that such plans should be publicly available. One

respondent who agreed Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public stated:

*I believe one should have access to more information than is needed to solve the current problem, so one can prepare should an incident escalate. Information issued only on a 'need to know' basis may indicate something the source wishes to hide.*

The vast majority of respondents who believed Emergency Plans should be public documents commented security details and contact numbers must remain confidential and should be excluded from public copies.

#### Perceived Benefits Of Best Value In Emergency Management:

Respondents were asked to identify the three main benefits they hoped could be achieved by applying Best Value to local authority Emergency Management. The top five benefits identified overall are shown in Table 6.4.

<u>Top Five Benefits</u>	
1. Improved quality of Emergency Management service	94%
2. Developing partnerships	54%
3. Providing an Emergency Management service which responds to public needs	49%
4. Opportunity for continuous improvement	37%
5. Raising professionalism of Emergency Management	22%

Table 6.4.: Top Five Benefits

### Perceived Constraints Of Emergency Management Adopting Best Value:

Respondents were also asked to identify the three issues they believed would be the biggest constraints to local authority Emergency Management successfully adopting Best Value. The top five constraints identified overall are shown in Table 6.5.

<u>Top Five Constraints</u>	
1. Lack of national quality standards for Emergency Management	86%
2. Decreasing Civil Defence Grant	26%
3. Lack of Emergency Management legislation	14%
4. Lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Management Officers	7%
5. Inconsistent working boundaries/Lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public	6%

Table 6.5.: Top Five Constraints

### Additional Comments:

Respondents were also given the opportunity within the questionnaire to make additional comments they deemed to be relevant to the application of Best Value to Emergency Management. Fifty two respondents made such comments and analysis found that several key themes emerged as shown in Table 6.6.

<u>Additional Comment Themes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusion regarding Shire County Council and Shire District Council role in Emergency Management</li> <li>• The importance of adequate legislation, funding and quality standards</li> <li>• Uncertainty regarding public consultation</li> <li>• The need for national consistency in applying Best Value to Emergency Management</li> <li>• The optimism that Best Value can improve Emergency Management</li> <li>• Concerns regarding sustainability of continuous improvement in Emergency Management</li> </ul>

Table 6.6.: Additional Comment Themes

Many of the themes shown in Table 6.6. overlap and impact upon each other. Several respondents felt strongly enough to comment upon the difficulties that are experienced in providing an Emergency Management service in Two Tier local authorities, e.g. *“There appears to be an inconsistent understanding of the relative roles of County and District Councils which makes for difficulty in funding and standard setting”* and *“With the present Two Tier system of local government there is a continuous clash of interests and duplication of effort. County gets the grant – keeps it all – yet District/Boroughs do the work! A clear set of criteria for each tier must be set out and supported by legislation”*. These views were best summarized by one respondent who stated:

*Until the strategic importance of Shire Districts is reflected in statutory duties and funding provision much of their potential in the event of a major emergency will not be realized. Their local knowledge and local base places them in a*



*position to provide a quick initial response their County Council could not. It is fanciful to think that a remote county Emergency Planning Unit could obtain the maximum Emergency Planning potential from a District Council when they are not involved in any policy discussions regarding Emergency Planning or provided with any grant for their efforts. The allocation of grant should include an element to reflect the level of risk the location poses.*

Another consistent theme was the belief that an improved Emergency Management service in the future is dependent upon obtaining adequate legislation, funding and quality standards:

- *The statutory basis for Emergency Planning are the 'Civil Defence Regulations 1983' and 'Civil Defence Act 1948'. Thus grant is legally to be used for dealing with 'hostile attack'. These regulations require to be repealed and a realistic new duty imposed on local authorities with proper funding.*
- *Best Value is irrelevant as long as the following is not in place, in this order: legislation – standards – funding.*
- *The lack of funding is the main constraint. We have an excellent, well equipped emergency centre but lack of funds limit improvements which are necessary in this electronic era.*
- *Emergency Planning cannot progress until new legislation is in place. Whilst Best Value is applauded, cohesive progress is unlikely until legislation is achieved. Unless central government fund Emergency Planning at a sustainable level then legislation and Best Value will count for little.*

Many respondents voiced their uncertainty regarding the value of public consultation, e.g. *“A key issue is that the concept of Emergency Planning is nebulous – the public want to know the various public agencies will respond when there is an emergency – I am not sure they are interested in the hows and whys”*. Several respondents also voiced concerns about Best Value not being applied to Emergency Management in a consistent way, e.g.:

*There should be a single start date for Best Value analysis throughout all Emergency Planning Units in the country. This would make the task a lot easier for all. The Home Office Emergency Planning Division should lead the way on this and provide necessary information to all Emergency Planning Officers so there is not a considerable amount of duplication of effort and re-invention of the one design of wheel” and “Best Value may leave Emergency Planning untouched if there is no capacity to consider strategic issues such as the scale of operation, joint working with other local authorities etc.*

Despite these concerns, many respondents commented they were optimistic about the introduction of Best Value in Emergency Management, e.g. *“If this (Best Value) can influence central government to start treating possible emergencies with the necessary seriousness and to start supporting Emergency Planning Units then I feel it will be worthwhile”*. However, some reservations were expressed about the achievement of sustainable continuous improvement in Emergency Management, e.g.:

*Best Value is likely to only be proven effective in the short to medium term. The difficulty with the 25% of best authorities depressing the already fragile morale of*

*the remaining 75% may prove to be a greater obstacle even than diminishing resources. The best can become the enemy of the good.*

#### Implications Of The Results:

From the analysis of the individual census questions, several themes have begun to emerge as shown in Tables 6.7. and 6.8., which indicate areas of consistency and disagreement respectively amongst the respondents.

#### Areas of Consistency

The majority of respondents believe:

- change is needed in local government decision making approaches and general service delivery;
- Best Value will enhance local government decision making and service delivery;
- the Emergency Management service could be improved by implementing Best Value;
- there is no consistency in Emergency Management service delivery across the UK;
- existing working boundaries should remain;
- new civil protection legislation is needed in order to achieve Best Value;
- the Emergency Management service should be funded by a combination of central government specific grant and local authority contribution;
- the level of Civil Defence Grant is insufficient;
- external funding and sponsorship should not play a role in future service delivery;
- a national Emergency Management Inspectorate and national performance indicators are needed to raise service standards;
- the service must be provided by local authority personnel;

- the public should have an input into planning for emergencies and a role in responding to them;
- Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public and such plans should be publicly available.

Table 6.7.: Areas of Consistency

#### Areas of Disagreement

- Just under half of respondents (48%) believe Emergency Management is fully integrated into their authority's corporate aims and objectives.
- Just over half of respondents (54%) believe they provide an Emergency Management service reflecting local community needs.
- Only 37% of respondents felt confident their local community was aware of the Emergency Management service.

Table 6.8.: Areas of Disagreement

It is worthwhile at this point considering collectively the findings contained in Tables 6.4. to 6.8. inclusive. The majority of respondents perceived Best Value Reviews of Emergency Management could help to improve service quality, develop partnerships, respond to public needs, ensure continuous improvement and raise the professionalism of the service. However, several constraints have the potential to jeopardize the effectiveness of such a service Review including lack of national standards, decreasing Civil Defence Grant, lack of legislation, lack of understanding of Best Value, inconsistent working boundaries, lack of public understanding of the service, confusion regarding

service delivery within Two Tier local authorities, the lack of service delivery consistency nationally and concerns as to how sustainable continuous improvement is actually achievable within the service. Tables 6.7. and 6.8. detailed the key areas of consistency and areas of disagreement identified from the analysis. When considering both these tables together it became apparent there is current ambiguity in relation to integration of the service into an authority's corporate aims and objectives. These results also reveal there are conflicting views regarding current levels of community awareness and understanding of the service. Any approach used to undertake an Emergency Management Best Value Review must address the constraints and areas of ambiguity identified in this research in order to achieve the perceived benefits of the process. The issue of appropriate approaches that can be employed by local authorities when embarking upon an Emergency Management Best Value Review are considered in depth in Chapter Seven.

#### Testing Key Hypotheses:

Five key hypotheses were developed from the literature review and are shown in Table 6.9. These hypotheses aimed to identify the extent to which the issues of funding, legislation, performance measurement, culture and organisation as well as public awareness will influence the effective implementation of Best Value.

### Hypotheses

H1: The funding an Emergency Management service receives from Civil Defence Grant and/or by in-house local authority financial contribution influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is provided.

H2: The legislative base to which a local authority's Emergency Management service operates influences the way in which the service is provided.

H3: The way in which an Emergency Management service is monitored nationally influences how it is provided.

H4: The cultural elements of a local authority in relation to its geographical location, structure, high-level support and working boundaries influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is provided.

H5: The publics' level of awareness and understanding of the local authority Emergency Management service influences the effectiveness of the service.

Table 6.9.: Hypotheses

For each hypothesis a number of supporting tests were developed and undertaken. The supporting tests, with rationale, key variables and results for hypotheses one to five are listed in Appendix G. Each hypothesis will now be discussed in detail. Significant associations are reported, and in turn explained, at the 5%, 1% and 0.1% levels.

Hypothesis One: The funding an Emergency Management service receives from Civil Defence Grant and/or by in-house local authority financial contribution influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is provided. This hypothesis and supporting results will look at the extent of the impact of funding upon stakeholder perception.

During the literature review it emerged there are two ways in which an Emergency Management service is funded, i.e. by an allocation of specific central government grant and/or by local authority in-house financial contribution. A number of local authority Emergency Management services receive funding from both identified sources, some from just one of the two sources whilst other Emergency Management services receive no funding at all. Data from the survey was considered in order to test the hypothesis the funding received influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is perceived to be provided. In addition to the level and source of funding received, several other influencing issues were identified as follows:

- Internal support for the Emergency Management service
- Local community's awareness of Emergency Management issues
- The expectation of Best Value in Emergency Management
- The current perceptions of Emergency Management service delivery
- The preferences for future Emergency Management service delivery

### Internal Support For Emergency Management Service:

Significant association (0.1% level) was identified between a local authority's status relating to the receipt of a Civil Defence Grant and the extent to which their Elected Members were perceived to be supportive of, and took an active interest in, the Emergency Management service. Those stakeholders working in a local authority in receipt of the Grant were more likely to perceive their Elected Members as being active and positive in their support for the Emergency Management service. This suggests as a result of receiving Emergency Management funding from an 'external' organisation such as central government, there is a sense of accountability in order to prove the finance has been used in a responsible and acceptable fashion. Additionally, there was also a highly significant association (0.1% level) between a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status and the existence of an in-house financial contribution towards the Emergency Management service. Testing revealed those from local authorities who receive Grant are more likely to make a financial contribution from their own money towards the service. When taking both these findings together, they perhaps suggest once Elected Members have accepted their external accountability they are more likely to support and take an interest in the service, thus they are also more likely to permit extra local authority spending in this area.

The literature review suggested local authorities required specific funding in order to fully integrate the Emergency Management service into their corporate aims and objectives. A significant association was identified (1% level) between a local



authority's Civil Defence Grant status and their Emergency Management stakeholders perception relating to how the service was fully integrated into the corporate aims and objectives of an authority. A greater than expected number of stakeholders representing local authorities in receipt of Civil Defence Grant allocation strongly believed the Emergency Management service was integrated into their authority's aims and objectives. This finding suggests local authorities require specific funding in order to integrate the Emergency Management service into their corporate aims and objectives. Integration of Emergency Management into the corporate aims and objectives suggests that Emergency Management forms part of an authority's culture and that ownership for the service has been accepted by the authority. It was interesting to note no significant association existed between a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status and an explicit reference to Emergency Management in the job description of their Chief Executive (or equivalent). This lack of association perhaps suggests Chief Executives accept they must take ownership and be ultimately responsible for all the actions their local authority undertakes including responding accordingly to extraordinary circumstances (e.g. setting up a task force group to combat the affects of the closure of a mass employer or responding to localized flooding) irrespective of the existence or magnitude of central government funding.

#### Local Community Awareness Of Emergency Management Issues:

The literature review suggested local authorities have been encouraged by central government for a considerable period of time to interact with their local communities in

order to determine service priorities. The findings from this research so far have indicated many Elected Members (i.e. the elected community representatives) are perceived to be supportive of and take an active interest in Emergency Management and that many stakeholders feel Emergency Management has been integrated into corporate aims and objectives. However, it is interesting no significant association was found to exist between a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status and the perception of a local community's understanding their authority has a role to perform before, during and after an emergency. Similarly, no significant association was found to exist between Civil Defence Grant status and the Emergency Management stakeholders perception of the local community's awareness of the service. Moreover, there was also no significant association between a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status and perception from stakeholders of the extent to which the service provided reflected the needs of its local community. Lack of any significant statistical association in any of these tests suggests Emergency Management stakeholders who represent local authorities that receive a Civil Defence Grant are no more likely to believe their organisation have consulted, at any time, with their local community (either to make them aware of the Emergency Management service and its purpose or to ask what specific issues and risks the community would like addressing) than their counterparts who represent authorities which are not in receipt of any such funding. This arguably implies a lack of customer focus par se. Additional testing was undertaken to see whether the perceptions of local authorities 'strategists' (the Chief Executive and Elected Members) differed from the perceptions held by 'operational' level staff (Best Value Managers and Emergency Management professionals). No statistical significance was found to exist between

strategists and operational staff whose local authority received Civil Defence Grant and their perception of the extent to which the Emergency Management service reflects local community needs. This finding suggests even if a local authority does receive Civil Defence Grant there is no significant difference in the perceptions of strategists and operational staff regarding the reflectiveness of the service they provide. This perhaps suggests there is no conflict of views between strategists and operational staff where one group is no more or less committed than the other to a particular view.

#### Expectation Of Best Value In Emergency Management:

No significant association was found to exist between a local authority's status in terms of receiving a Civil Defence Grant and the extent to which Emergency Management stakeholders perceived the service could be improved by the implementation of Best Value. This lack of significant association suggests Civil Defence Grant funding does not have an impact upon Emergency Management stakeholders perceptions regarding the potential of implementing a measurement system to the service. However, there is a highly significant association (0.1% level) between the existence of an in-house financial contribution towards the Emergency Management service and the Emergency Management stakeholders belief that the service can be improved by the implementation of Best Value. Stakeholders from authorities that make an in-house financial contribution are found to be more likely to be positive in their attitude towards Best Value in the Emergency Management service. This finding indicates many stakeholders are aware their authority is financially supporting a service for which there is no statutory

requirement and that perhaps Best Value potentially offers a mechanism to question openly and publicly how and why the service is provided. Indeed, a significant association (5% level) was identified between local authorities status regarding internal financial contribution and the perception of service stakeholders that the Emergency Management service was working towards Best Value (prior to it becoming legislation). There was an even more significant association (0.1% level) identified between a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status and the perception of stakeholders that the Emergency Management service was working towards Best Value ahead of it becoming legislation. This finding suggests Emergency Management stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant were more likely to perceive their service was working towards Best Value prior to it becoming a legislative duty, perhaps because of their perceived external accountability to central government.

#### Current Perception Of Emergency Management Service Delivery:

When looking at current Emergency Management arrangements a number of supporting tests were undertaken to determine consistency of service delivery. No significant association exists between a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status and the Emergency Management stakeholders perception the service is provided to a consistent standard across mainland U.K.. However, there is a significant association (5% level) between Civil Defence Grant allocation and the service stakeholders perception Emergency Management arrangements in England, Scotland and Wales should be capable of dovetailing together regardless of differences in national and local laws or

customs, where those in receipt of Grant are more likely to believe such arrangements are capable of being achieved. A possible explanation for this perception is that stakeholders from local authorities receiving Civil Defence Grant allocation will have some form of Emergency Management service in place and as a result they will have a much greater awareness emergencies can occur affecting more than one country at a time within the U.K., e.g. coastal oil pollution spills or aircraft crashes. These stakeholders are also more likely to appreciate differences in national and local laws or customs can potentially lead to additional complications hampering mutual aid assistance between local authorities.

#### Perception For Future Emergency Management Service Delivery:

A highly significant association (0.1% level) was identified between an authority's Civil Defence Grant status and the Emergency Management stakeholders belief a national stand-alone Emergency Management Unit (replacing all local authority Emergency Management Officers) would provide the most effective form of service. Those from local authorities in receipt of Grant were less likely to believe a national stand-alone Unit would provide the most effective service. This association indicates stakeholders from local authorities not in receipt of any specific funding to provide the Emergency Management service believe a national body rather than local authorities should provide the service. This finding suggests if no funding is received then the authority is less likely to provide an Emergency Management service. Similarly, there is also a very significant association (0.1% level) between Civil Defence Grant status and the stakeholders perception a national Emergency Management Unit supporting local

authority Emergency Management Officers would provide the most effective form of service delivery. This association perhaps suggests local authorities who currently receive specific funding for the service would prefer a central Unit to be established providing them with appropriate support rather than such a Unit being established to replace the service provided by local authorities. This contrasts with the finding that there is significant association (5% level) between Grant status and stakeholder perception there is no need for a national Emergency Management Unit. This suggests stakeholders from local authorities that receive Civil Defence Grant from central government would prefer to continue providing a service in this way rather than have an additional 'layer' in the provision of the Emergency Management service. The overall perception is stakeholders from local authorities in receipt of a Grant are more likely to believe there is no need for a national Emergency Management Unit whilst stakeholders whose organisations are not in receipt of a Grant are more likely to believe there is a need for a national Unit, in other words, local authorities receiving Grant are more likely to prefer the Emergency Management service to continue being delivered at a local level with some support being offered centrally while local authorities not in receipt of Grant tend to prefer the idea of a centralised Emergency Management service.

Working boundaries were also considered to be a key influencer upon service funding. A very significant association (0.1% level) exists between a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status and the service stakeholders perception Emergency Management should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries. A greater than expected proportion of stakeholders from local authorities receiving a Grant indicated

their authority had established procedures and plans in operation that worked within their current administrative boundaries. Because of Local Government Re-organisation, many local authorities have recently undertaken considerable additional work to amend Emergency Management procedures to re-align themselves with new administrative working boundaries. Whilst amending procedures can be undertaken quickly, integrating them into the culture of the local authority potentially takes considerably more time and effort in terms of staff (and multi-agency) liaison, training and exercising (Home Office, 1998). Stakeholders from local authorities in receipt of a Civil Defence Grant have been found to be more favourable in their perception Emergency Management should continue to delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries whilst stakeholders from local authorities not in receipt of a Grant are more likely to disagree with this perception. This result is perhaps not surprising because those who currently receive Grant actually have the funding to deliver the service locally.

The issue of wider regional working boundaries was also explored. A significant association (5% level) was identified between stakeholder perception of their local authority's commitment to making a financial contribution towards the Emergency Management service and their belief the service should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries. This association suggests stakeholders from local authorities making a financial contribution towards the service are more likely to recognize it is not a statutory duty and perhaps feel adopting wider regional boundaries would allow economies of scale to be achieved as well as pooling expertise. For example, an effective communication system is a proven and essential element of providing an efficient

response to an emergency because it ensures all responding organisations can talk to each other and co-ordinate their actions as appropriately (Home Office, 1998).

Communication can take many different forms ranging from high-technology to low-technology mediums. Many local authorities in isolation cannot afford to purchase and maintain high-tech communication equipment. If several pooled together, however, to bulk purchase equipment they could achieve financial economies of scale and have better communication facilities. An additional test was undertaken to determine if there was an association between strategists and operational staff from local authorities that make a contribution towards the Emergency Management service and their perception of wider regional working boundaries. No significant statistical association was identified. The majority of both strategists and operational staff, however, did not agree the service should be delivered in accordance with working boundaries wider than those currently in existence. This suggests all parties would prefer the provision of their Emergency Management service to remain at a local level.

Funding is perhaps understandably an important factor in the future delivery of Emergency Management. The extent to which stakeholders from local authorities not making any in-house financial contribution towards the service believed the service should be funded in entirety by central government was considered. A highly significant association (0.1% level) was identified between the role of in-house financial contribution and the stakeholders perception that Emergency Management should be funded solely by specific central government grant. Stakeholders whose local authority did not make a financial contribution towards the Emergency Management service were



more likely to have the opinion funding should come solely from central government. This suggests at a time when local authorities are facing severe financial difficulties in maintaining and improving existing services that are a statutory requirement, stakeholders involved in Emergency Management perhaps do not feel able to justify to their local community a decision to fund a non-statutory service, no matter how important it is perceived to be, especially if they have no tradition of providing it. However, there was no statistically significant association between the extent of local authority contribution and the perception of stakeholders that the level of Central Government Grant being appropriate to fund an effective Emergency Management service.

Respondents' perceptions regarding future distribution of funding were also considered. No statistically significant association was found between the levels of perceived confidence amongst stakeholders in providing an Emergency Management service reflecting local community needs and their belief funding should be allocated according to a risk/benefit analysis. This lack of significant association perhaps suggests general uncertainty as to what mechanism should actually be used to distribute any central government Grant. This is supported by no significant association existing between perceptions of whether the new Civil Defence Grant formula will allocate money effectively and the perceptions of how external funding and sponsorship may play a greater role in future Emergency Management provision. Additionally, there was no significant association between stakeholders perceptions of the level of Grant and their understanding of the role of external funding and sponsorship in future service provision. Overall, the majority of Emergency Management stakeholders had a negative perception

of external funding and sponsorship in future service provision. This is an interesting finding because one of the government's options for achieving Best Value is to provide services through more public-private partnerships (Sparke, 1999). There is a significant association (1% level), however, between the receipt of the Civil Defence Grant by a local authority and stakeholder perceptions of the role external funding and sponsorship should play in future Emergency Management. In this instance, a greater than expected number of stakeholders from authorities not receiving Grant were also unsupportive of external funding and sponsorship in Emergency Management service provision. This perhaps suggests those who do not currently receive a Grant do not perceive they have ownership of the service. In addition, it suggests they do not believe they should endeavour to seek finance from outside the local government/central government arena and start to provide a service for which historically they have no experience.

Hypothesis Two: The legislative base to which a local authority's Emergency Management service operates influences the way in which the service is provided. This hypothesis will examine the extent to which stakeholder perception is affected by legislation.

With the exception of several specific acts of legislation, the legislative base for the local authority Emergency Management service is in the context of Civil Defence. Survey responses were analysed to assess whether the current legislative base influences the way in which the Emergency Management service is perceived to operate.

There was a statistically significant association (5% level) between Civil Defence Grant status and the extent to which Emergency Management stakeholders perceived Best Value could only be achieved in the service if new civil protection legislation was introduced. The majority of stakeholders representing local authorities not in receipt of Civil Defence Grant indicated Best Value could only be achieved in the service once new civil protection legislation was enforced. This result was not surprising because emergencies have the potential to occur anywhere, not just within the area of a local authority in receipt of Civil Defence Grant. This finding suggests many Emergency Management stakeholders hope new civil protection legislation will state clearly what is required of local authorities in terms of providing an Emergency Management service. In contrast, no statistically significant association was found to exist between the extent of local authority financial contribution and the perception of Emergency Management stakeholders that Best Value is only achievable if new civil protection legislation is enacted. This result was somewhat surprising when considering the Emergency Management service's current legislative base, Best Value could reveal many local authorities are spending a proportion of their finance on a service for which there is no legal requirement. Similarly, no statistically significant association was found to exist between the level of confidence in an Emergency Management service reflecting needs of the local community and the perception of stakeholders that Best Value is only achievable once new civil protection legislation is in force. No significant differences were found to exist between strategists and operational staff who indicated in similar proportions they were not confident their Emergency Management service reflected local community needs and the belief Best Value is only achievable if new civil protection

legislation is enacted. By contrast, a greater than expected number of operational staff strongly agreed new legislation was needed in order to achieve Best Value in the service. These latter findings suggest many Emergency Management stakeholders are not convinced a new legislative duty alone will ensure Best Value principles are achieved in local authority Emergency Management services.

Hypothesis Three: The way in which an Emergency Management service is monitored nationally influences how it is provided. The results provided below help indicate the full extent of formal measurement systems on stakeholder perception.

The literature review highlighted that one central government department (the Cabinet Office) had day-to-day responsibility for overseeing the local authority Emergency Management service in England and Wales, with the Scottish Executive performing the same role in Scotland. The literature also indicated that any central government department has the potential to be appointed to take the lead in an emergency response depending upon the specific nature of the emergency, e.g. the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (formerly the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) assumed the lead role during the foot and mouth outbreaks in 2001 (National Audit Office, June 2002). Despite the potentially important role central government can play in an emergency response, the literature reviewed indicated on a day-to-day basis the interface between central government and local authorities regarding Emergency Management was relatively weak (Ward, November 2000).

A highly significant association (0.1% level) was identified between the stakeholders perceived support for a national Emergency Management Inspectorate in order to raise the service's standard plus disseminate good practice and their belief Emergency Management arrangements in England, Scotland and Wales should dovetail. This suggests the majority of stakeholders believe a national body dedicated to Emergency Management could potentially ensure the standard of Emergency Management services across the UK were consistent, reflecting good practice and dovetailing regardless of national and local laws or customs better than decentralized or local providers operating autonomously from central government being solely responsible for their own relationships with neighbouring providers. A strong significant association (0.1% level) was also identified between perceived support for national Emergency Management performance indicators as an integral part of raising the service's standard and the belief Emergency Management arrangements should dovetail regardless of location. It was interesting many Emergency Management stakeholders who believed Emergency Management arrangements should dovetail regardless of location strongly agreed national performance indicators are key to raising service standards. By contrast, those stakeholders who disagreed with the need for compatible arrangements also tend to disagree with the need for national performance indicators. This suggests such stakeholders tend to believe Emergency Management arrangements should be unique and appropriate for the area they cover and should not be dictated on a national basis for the sake of consistency.

No statistically significant association was found between stakeholders whose Emergency Management services were working towards Best Value prior to legislation and the extent of their belief that national performance indicators should be an integral part of raising the service's standard<sup>3</sup>. This finding suggests the current lack of national performance indicators is neither deterring nor encouraging local authorities from working towards Best Value ahead of the legislative duty. This result was somewhat surprising when considering the potential argument it is very difficult to prove a service is being delivered competitively without having comparative data upon which to base that judgment, especially since no national historical data exists regarding Emergency Management service delivery. In addition, local authorities are currently unable to measure and manage their performance on a formal basis.

Another significant association (1% level) was found to exist between the levels of support for an Emergency Management Inspectorate and stakeholders perceptions as to who should deliver the service. The majority of stakeholders (71%) indicated they believe Emergency Management is a service that must be delivered by local authority personnel. In contrast, a significant association (1% level) was identified between the levels of support for national performance indicators in raising Emergency Management service standards and stakeholder perceptions as to who should deliver the service. This finding suggests many stakeholders believe whilst there are national performance indicators then who actually delivers the Emergency Management service is irrelevant

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<sup>3</sup> At the time of data collection the Home Office (the then central government department with day-to-day responsibility for Emergency Management) were due to publish a series of national performance indicators to compliment their already published generic quality standards document. However, at the time of thesis publication these national performance indicators are still to be released.

because the service will be monitored to ensure standards are met consistently throughout local authority areas. This view is strengthened by the fact no significant difference was found to exist between strategists and operational staff that are supportive of national Emergency Management performance indicators and their perception of who should deliver the service in the future. The majority of both strategists and operational staff believed Emergency Management services should be provided by local authority personnel.

Hypothesis Four: The cultural elements of a local authority in relation to its geographical location, structure, high-level support and working boundaries influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is provided.

The literature review indicated certain cultural elements of a local authority have the potential to influence the way in which an Emergency Management service is provided.

The cultural aspects considered are:

- the influence of geographical location (within the U.K.)
- the influence of structure
- the influence of high level support
- the influence of working boundaries

### The Influence Of Geographical Location (Within The U.K.):

A significant association (1% level) was found between how an Emergency Management service is delivered and Emergency Management stakeholders beliefs regarding the perceived need for service consistency across the U.K.. The majority of stakeholders whose authority delivers an Emergency Management service via either an in-house Emergency Management Officers or by a similar Officers attached to another local authority believe the service is not provided consistently across the U.K. compared with the perceptions of those whose service is provided via another way (shown earlier in Table 6.2.).

A significant association (5% level) was also identified between Emergency Management stakeholders perceptions of service consistency throughout the U.K. and the extent of their belief that Emergency Management arrangements should be compatible regardless of variations in national and local laws or customs. The majority of stakeholders indicated whilst Emergency Management arrangements are not delivered consistently at the moment, such arrangements could or should be compatible in the future. This finding suggests there should be consistency and compatibility in Emergency Management arrangements throughout the U.K. which implies joint working and mutual aid support are seen as key requirements in responding to an emergency.

A highly significant association (0.1% level) was discovered between the perceived levels of service consistency across the U.K. and stakeholders level of support for the



service being provided by a national stand-alone Emergency Management Unit, that replaced all local authority Units. The majority of stakeholders who were of the opinion Emergency Management services are not delivered consistently nationally were also of the opinion a National Unit (replacing local authority Units) would equally not provide an effective service. This finding was surprising because a national stand-alone Unit could potentially make and implement decisions throughout the U.K.. For example, the existence of a national stand-alone Unit would mean irrespective of the cause or location of a particular emergency, the same response procedures would apply. However, this finding perhaps suggests stakeholders believe nationally imposed decisions and procedures would not take into consideration local issues. This particular association suggests while Emergency Management stakeholders accept services are not currently delivered consistently they also do not feel the service should be delivered by a stand-alone Unit in isolation.

#### The Influence Of Structure:

A highly significant association (0.1% level) exists between local authority structure and how an Emergency Management service is delivered. A greater than expected number of Emergency Management stakeholders from English Single Tier and Scottish Unitaries deliver a service by in-house designated Emergency Management Officer(s), whilst a greater than expected number of stakeholders from English Two Tier authorities deliver the service by Emergency Management Officer(s) attached to another local authority within the Two Tier structure. By contrast, a greater than expected number of

stakeholders from Welsh Unitaries used “other approaches” to deliver their service (as shown earlier in Table 6.2.).

A strong association (5% level) was identified between local authority structure and the level of explicit reference to Emergency Management in the job description of the Chief Executive (or equivalent). A greater than expected number of stakeholders from Scottish and Welsh Unitaries had a Chief Executive (or equivalent) with an explicit Emergency Management reference in their job description and a lesser than expected number of stakeholders from English Single Tier and English Two Tier authorities. This finding suggests two possible issues. First, Chief Executives (or equivalent) in Scotland and Wales perhaps take greater responsibility for Emergency Management than their English counterparts and secondly, there is potential uncertainty in England, with both the Single Tier and Two Tier forms of local government in operation, where responsibility for Emergency Management rests.

A very strong association (0.1% level) exists between the structure of a local authority and the Emergency Management stakeholders perception of the extent to which the service is integrated into corporate aims and objectives. A greater than expected number of stakeholders from English Single Tier authorities, Scottish and Welsh Unitaries indicated Emergency Management was integrated into their corporate aims and objectives. This finding perhaps suggests Emergency Management is better integrated into the aims and objectives of Single Tier local authorities than in their Two Tier counterparts.

No significant statistical association was discovered between local authority structure and Emergency Management stakeholders perception that change is necessary in local government decision making processes. It was interesting to note the vast majority of Emergency Management stakeholders (81%) believed change was needed in decision making processes. However, a significant association (5% level) was identified between local authority structure and stakeholder beliefs Best Value would enhance local government's decision making. A greater than expected number of stakeholders from English Single Tier, Welsh and Scottish Unitaries believed Best Value could enhance local government decision making than with stakeholders from English Two Tier authorities who were less inclined to believe Best Value would enhance decision making. This suggests stakeholders from Single Tier local authorities are perhaps more receptive to Best Value than stakeholders from Two Tier authorities. A possible explanation for this finding is most Single Tier local authorities have gone through a radical change process as a result of Local Government Re-organisation in the 1990s shifting them towards an 'enabling' focus, i.e. *"(they are now) identifying requirements, setting priorities, determining standards of service and finding the best way of ensuring that these standards are met"* (Wilson et al., 1994). Indeed, the Local Government Commission for England reported the advantages of unitary authorities included *"their ability to develop a co-ordinated approach to service delivery, their claimed enhancement of local accountability and their improved efficiency and effectiveness"* (Wilson et al., 1994). Similarly, a significant association (5% level) was found between local authority structure and stakeholder perception that change was necessary in local

government service delivery. A greater than expected number of stakeholders from English Single Tier and Welsh Unitaries believed change was necessary in local government service delivery. As with the previous result, the perception of stakeholders within these organisations is that Single Tier local authorities are more likely to believe new approaches are needed in local government service delivery. This finding suggests Single Tier local authorities are perhaps more innovative and visionary in their approach to service delivery because they have fewer constraints than Two Tier authorities and greater autonomy (Chisholm, June 2000). Similarly, a significant association (1% level) exists between local authority structure and stakeholder belief Best Value could enhance local government's service delivery. A greater than expected number of stakeholders from English Single Tier authorities, Welsh and Scottish Unitaries believe Best Value will enhance service delivery whilst a greater than expected number of stakeholders from English Two Tier authorities do not believe Best Value will achieve this. This indicates Single Tier local authorities appear currently to be more receptive to Best Value and have higher expectations of it compared with their counterparts who work in Two Tier authorities. However, it is interesting to note no statistically significant association was found to exist between local authority structure and stakeholders perceptions that Emergency Management can be improved by the implementation of Best Value. This result occurs despite a strong significant association (0.1% level) being identified between local authority structure and stakeholders indicating they have an Emergency Management service working towards Best Value prior to legislation. The apparent contradiction between the last two findings suggest despite stakeholders implementing Best Value in Emergency Management, they are no more or no less likely to believe the

process will result in service improvements. This perhaps implies stakeholders believe Best Value alone is not enough to improve the Emergency Management service and changes are also required to the factors underpinning the services work.

Significant association (5% level) was identified between local authority structure and the level of stakeholder perception that Emergency Management is a service provided consistently across the U.K.. It was perhaps not surprising a greater than expected proportion of English Two Tier stakeholders believed Emergency Management was not provided consistently when considering the current uncertainty of where responsibility for the service rests within Two Tier authorities.

A highly significant association (0.1% level) exists between local authority structure and stakeholder perception that a national Emergency Management Unit supporting local authority Units would provide the most effective form of service. It was interesting the majority of Emergency Management stakeholders representing English Single and Two Tier local authorities were in favour of such a national Unit whilst the majority of stakeholders representing Welsh and Scottish Unitaries were opposed to such a creation, perhaps because it was perceived to contradict the recent acts allowing devolved government. In contrast, there is a significant association (5% level) between local authority structure and the perception a national Emergency Management Unit is unnecessary. The majority of Emergency Management stakeholders representing English Single Tier, Welsh and Scottish Unitaries did not believe a national Unit was needed. However, it was interesting the majority of representatives from English Two Tier local

authorities disagreed with this suggesting the lack of clarity in the Two Tier system means improvements can be made if a national, centralised provision was offered as an alternative. This finding also perhaps implies stakeholders from Two Tier authorities feel more vulnerable in terms of the robustness and effectiveness of their current Emergency Management procedures.

The analysis revealed a highly significant association (0.1% level) between local authority structure and Emergency Management stakeholders perceived levels of confidence in local communities being aware their local authority is actively seeking to involve them in policy decision-making. The majority of stakeholders representing all types of local authority indicated they are not yet confident their local community is aware of their potential role in policy decision-making. This result was not surprising; at the time of the census, Best Value was not a legislative duty and many authorities were still in the process of putting in place their mechanisms for community consultation.

No significant statistical association was identified between local authority structure and stakeholders opinion that Emergency Management should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries. In addition, no statistically significant association was identified between structure and perception Emergency Management should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries. These two results indicate there is general uncertainty amongst Emergency Management stakeholders as to which geographical political boundaries the service should work towards.

A significant association (1% level) was discovered between structure and the level of stakeholder belief Best Value can only be achieved in Emergency Management if new civil protection legislation is enacted placing a statutory duty upon all local authorities. The majority of English Single and Two Tier plus Welsh Unitary respondents believe Best Value can only be achieved in Emergency Management if civil protection legislation is introduced. This suggests many stakeholders expect new legislation to clearly state what is expected of a local authority in Emergency Management and this would subsequently provide a basis upon which a Best Value Review could be based. It was particularly interesting a greater than expected number of stakeholders representing Scottish Unitaries disagreed new legislation was needed in order to achieve Best Value in the Emergency Management service. A possible explanation for this apparent difference in perception is Best Value at this part of the research was being undertaken on a voluntary basis in Scotland compared with the mandatory implementation in England and Wales.

Testing identified a strong association (5% level) between a local authority's structure and the perceived need of stakeholders for a national Emergency Management Inspectorate. Whilst the majority of stakeholders indicated a National Inspectorate would raise service standards and disseminate good practice, English Two Tier representatives were overwhelmingly in favour of such a body, this being consistent with earlier results where stakeholders from Two Tier authorities suggested their Emergency Management arrangements were perhaps lacking in robustness and clarity compared with the provision offered by other responding agencies.

Significant association (5% level) was discovered to exist between local authority structure and the level of stakeholder belief as to who should provide the Emergency Management service. A greater than expected number of stakeholders from Welsh and Scottish Unitaries believed Emergency Management was a service that must be provided by local authority personnel. However, a less than expected number of English Two Tier authority stakeholders held the same opinion. Interestingly, this finding is perhaps consistent with the aims of devolved government. This finding suggests that as many Two Tier local authorities already provide an Emergency Management service by officers attached to another local authority, they are more likely to believe there is no difference between how their service is currently delivered and the service being provided in the future by personnel from another type of organisation on their behalf. In addition, this finding suggests Single Tier authorities feel Emergency Management is a service that must be delivered by local authority personnel. Similarly, a very strong significant association (0.1% level) became apparent between Emergency Management stakeholders perception that the service is integrated into corporate aims and objectives and their belief as to who should provide the service. This finding suggests stakeholders from local authorities that have fully integrated Emergency Management into their corporate aims and objectives are more likely to believe the service must be delivered by local authority personnel whilst stakeholders from local authorities that have not fully integrated the service into their aims and objectives are more likely to believe it can be out-sourced, i.e. provided by another organisation.



A strong significant association (1% level) exists between local authority structure and Emergency Management stakeholders perceived belief the public need to be consulted in pre-planning for emergencies. The majority of respondents were in favour of the public being consulted in pre-planning for emergencies, with stakeholders from Scottish Unitaries being the most receptive to this idea. Following a similar theme, a significant association (1% level) was identified between authority structure and stakeholders perceived belief the public should have a role to play in responding to an emergency. English Two Tier stakeholders as well as those from Scottish and Welsh authorities displayed the greatest support for the public having a role to play in emergency response. Both these findings when taken together suggest the majority of Emergency Management stakeholders believe there should be greater interface between the service and the public.

#### The Influence Of High-level Support:

A highly significant association (0.1% level) was identified between Emergency Management stakeholders perception of Chief Officers support and Elected Members support for the service. A greater than expected number of stakeholders whose Chief Officers were perceived to be very supportive and took an active interest in the service have Elected Members who were also perceived to be very supportive and took an active interest in the service. This suggests if Chief Officers support the service then their Elected Members are more likely also to be supportive. This is arguably a fair assumption when considering Chief Officers are a key influence upon Elected Members attitude and both work closely to determine policies and the strategic direction of an

authority. In general Chief Officers perform the preparatory work and make recommendations while Elected Members make the final decisions based upon the views and information supplied to them.

#### The Influence Of Working Boundaries:

Again, a highly significant association (0.1% level) was found between Emergency Management stakeholders perception that Emergency Management should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries and the level of confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the local community. This finding suggests Emergency Management stakeholders who are confident they provide a service reflecting the needs of their local community are also more likely to believe existing administrative boundaries should continue to be utilized. However, those stakeholders who do not believe they provide an adequate service are less likely to believe existing boundaries should continue to be used. Interestingly, there is no statistically significant association between the perceived belief Emergency Management should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries and that the service is delivered consistently across the U.K.. Unsurprisingly, a strong significant association (1% level) was discovered between perceived levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the local community and the perceived beliefs Emergency Management should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries. This finding implies Emergency Management stakeholders who are not confident they provide an Emergency Management service reflecting the needs of its local community are more likely to

believe the service should be delivered through wider regional boundaries. A possible explanation for this could be that stakeholders assume if the service was provided on a wider regional basis then a greater number of resources would be available to pool and utilize for service provision. Additionally, there is significant association (5% level) between perceived consistency in Emergency Management service delivery and the level of belief wider regional boundaries should be used. The perception appears to be that stakeholders who believe the Emergency Management service is not delivered to a consistent standard are more likely to believe wider regional working boundaries should be used. When considering these last two findings together, they suggest an Emergency Management service provided in-line with wider regional boundaries could cover a far greater area and allow resources and expertise to be pooled to ensure a consistent approach covers a wider area of local government in a more cost and resource effective way than at present.

Hypothesis Five: The publics' level of awareness, and understanding, of the local authority Emergency Management service influences the effectiveness of the service. This hypothesis aims to portray findings related to local customer empowerment.

All types of emergencies impact upon the public in either a large-scale or localized way. The literature review found in many emergencies the public are often involved in the response in some way. Responses to the census contained Emergency Management stakeholders perceptions regarding the level of public awareness and understanding of the local authority service.

### Public Awareness Of Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

A significant association (0.1% level) was discovered between Emergency Management stakeholders levels of confidence in community awareness of the local authority Emergency Management service and an explicit Emergency Management reference being made in the Chief Executive's (or equivalent's) job description. A greater than expected number of respondents whose Chief Executive did not have an explicit reference in their job description were not confident their community was aware of the Emergency Management service. This association suggests public awareness of Emergency Management is more likely to be enhanced when an explicit role is incorporated into a Chief Executive's job description, indeed in this scenario it can be argued an Executive is in no doubt of their Emergency Management responsibility and therefore is more likely to take the role seriously including raising awareness with the public compared with a Chief Executive without a specific job description reference. A significant association (0.1% level) was also identified between stakeholder levels of confidence in community awareness of the Emergency Management service and their perception of Elected Member support for the service. This finding implies Elected Members can have a very important role in getting information to the public about services being delivered and that they need to become actively involved in Emergency Management if public awareness is to be raised further.

No statistically significant association was found to exist between stakeholder levels of confidence in their public knowing its local authority has a role to perform before, during

and after an emergency and their belief Best Value implementation will improve the service. This result was somewhat surprising when considering a key element of Best Value is to not only talk to, but to consult with, the local community about services and how they are provided. For this reason, an additional test was undertaken to determine whether the opinions of strategists and operational staff differed. No statistically significant difference was found to exist between strategists and operational staff concerning their levels of confidence regarding how their public knew about the local authority's role before, during and after an emergency with their belief Best Value will improve the service. This finding mirrors the previous result. By contrast, a significant association (5% level) was identified between stakeholder levels of confidence in providing an Emergency Management service reflecting the needs of the local community and their perception the service can be improved by Best Value. A greater than expected number of stakeholders who believe they do not provide an Emergency Management service reflecting local community needs believe Best Value will improve the service. This perhaps suggests many Emergency Management stakeholders perceive Best Value will provide the opportunity to fundamentally review the service. It should facilitate why and how the service is provided and within this include consultation with internal and external stakeholders including the local community.

No statistical significance was identified between stakeholders perceived confidence in the public appreciating the role of a local authority before, during and after an emergency and representing a local authority with an Emergency Management service working towards Best Value prior to legislation. However, a very significant association (0.1%

level) was found between perceived levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the public and stakeholders having a service working towards Best Value prior to legislation. The majority of stakeholders who were confident their Emergency Management service reflected local needs were also most likely to be working towards Best Value perhaps being aware of the expectations/requirements of the Review.

A highly significant association (0.1% level) was identified between stakeholder levels of confidence in providing an Emergency Management service reflecting the needs of the local community and the perceived belief a national stand alone Emergency Management Unit would provide the most effective form of service. This suggests stakeholders who believe they provide a service reflecting the needs of their local community are less likely to believe a national stand-alone Unit would provide the most effective form of service delivery. Conversely, if an Emergency Management stakeholder believes the existing service does not reflect local needs they would perhaps be more receptive towards a national Unit being established. By contrast, there is very strong significant association (0.1% level) between perceived levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the local community and the feeling a national Emergency Management Unit is unnecessary. This finding suggests Emergency Management stakeholders believe their authority provides a service that reflects the needs of its local community are more likely to believe there is no need for a national Unit. Finally, no statistically significant association was found to exist between stakeholder confidence in providing an appropriate Emergency Management service and the belief a national Unit supporting local authorities would provide the most effective form of service delivery. From all of

these findings, it can be argued an Emergency Management service that is perceived as not reflecting local community needs is ineffective. This raises the issue is it possible to provide an Emergency Management service that does not reflect local needs but which is still effective? Several authors have written extensively on the subject of public perception of risk (Guerin, 1991, Craven and Stewart, 1997, Kemp, March 2000). Much of this work concludes the public's perception of risk is not a true reflection of actual risk. For example, Kemp (March 2000) is of the opinion a "*non-expert*" will focus upon worst-case scenarios irrespective of the low probability of such an event occurring, he contrasts this with the views of professionals who define risk as a product of likelihood and impact. Findings presented earlier in this chapter have indicated the public are either unaware of, or do not understand, the local authority's Emergency Management role and as a result their perception of risk is questionable. This suggests an Emergency Management service can be effective without necessarily reflecting what the local community perceive to be risks.

#### Potential Role Of Public In Emergency Management Service Delivery:

No statistically significant association was found to exist between perceived confidence in community awareness of the Emergency Management service and the belief the public need to have a voice in pre-planning for emergencies. Similarly, it was found no statistical significant differences existed between strategists and operational staff who stated they were confident their community were aware of the Emergency Management service and their perception of the public's potential input into pre-planning for

emergencies. The majority of strategists and operational staff believed the public should have an input into pre-planning and no significant difference exists between the two groups of professional. This suggests the views of strategists and operational staff coincide. More surprisingly, no statistically significant association was found to exist between the level of understanding of the principles of Best Value held by Emergency Management stakeholders and their belief the public need to have a voice in pre-planning for emergencies. This finding was surprising because one of the main principles of Best Value is to actively engage with the public to elicit their views on service delivery (Sparke, 1999) and those who do understand the principles of Best Value are potentially more inclined to educate the public. However, this finding was mirrored in the lack of significant association between the perceived need for change in local government decision making and the belief the public should have a voice in pre-planning for emergencies.

The issue of whether the public should have a role to play in responding to an emergency was considered. No statistically significant association was found to exist between the perception an Emergency Management service is provided which reflects the needs of the community and stakeholder beliefs regarding the role of the public in responding to an emergency. Similarly, there was also no statistically significant association discovered between stakeholder belief that changes are necessary to local government service delivery and the perception the public should be involved in emergency response. These findings perhaps suggest there is uncertainty whether the public should have a role to play in emergency response. Several respondents made additional comments in relation



to this issue indicating not only is there uncertainty about whether there should be a role for the public but also regarding what such a role should entail. For example, *“Community response ... may not always be appropriate”* and *“Leave response to emergency services and local authority teams”*. Some respondents were in favour of the public having a role with certain provisos; *“Providing the ‘public’ means volunteers from national bodies (such as British Red Cross, Womens Royal Voluntary Service)”*, *“Providing they have been professionally briefed”*) and one respondent believed *“(public) self-help is an integral part of Emergency Management”*.

Following this theme, consideration was given to whether Emergency Plans should be public documents. No statistically significant association was discovered between Emergency Management stakeholder understanding of Best Value principles and their perception as to whether Emergency Plans should be public documents. There was also no statistically significant association between local authority structure and the perceived belief Emergency Plans should be public documents. However, a very strong significant association (0.1% level) was discovered between stakeholders believing Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public and their belief that such plans should be public documents. This finding implies stakeholders who believe Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public also believe plans should be public documents without breaching security<sup>4</sup>. This suggests if the public are to understand Emergency Plans there needs to be a comprehensive

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<sup>4</sup> The vast majority of respondents who expressed such a view also stated the public must not be allowed access to confidential contact details or information that could compromise security.

consultation strategy in place addressing how to inform and consult with the public on Emergency Management issues.

Implications Of The Survey Findings:

From the results of the five hypotheses several significant associations have emerged as shown in Table 6.10.

Significant Associations

Civil Defence Grant status and:

- Perception of Elected Member supportiveness of the service;
- Making an in-house financial contribution towards the service;
- Having a service working towards Best Value ahead of legislation;
- Belief a national stand-alone Emergency Management Unit would provide the most effective form of service;
- Belief a national Emergency Management Unit, supporting local authority Units, would provide the most effective form of service;
- Perception of current working boundaries;
- Perception of service integration into authority's corporate aims and objectives;
- Belief external funding and sponsorship may play a role in future service provision;
- Perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the UK;
- Perception that a national Emergency Management Unit is necessary;
- Belief Best Value only achievable if new civil protection legislation is enacted;

Making an in-house financial contribution towards the service and:

- Perception Best Value could improve the service;
- Belief the service should be funded solely by specific central government grant;
- Having a service working towards Best Value ahead of legislation;
- Perception of wider regional working boundaries;

Perceived consistency of service delivery across the UK and:

- Belief a national stand-alone Emergency Management Unit would provide the most effective form of service;
- Perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the UK;
- Perception of wider regional working boundaries;

Perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the UK and:

- Level of support for national Emergency Management Inspectorate;
- Level of support for national performance indicators;
- How the service is currently delivered;

Local authority structure and:

- How the service is currently delivered;
- Perception of service integration into authority's corporate aims and objectives;
- Service working towards Best Value ahead of legislation;
- Belief a national Emergency Management Unit, supporting local authority Units, would provide the most effective form of service;
- Level of confidence that local community is aware their involvement is sought in policy decision making;
- Belief Best Value could enhance local government's service delivery;
- Belief Best Value only achievable if new civil protection legislation is enacted;
- Belief the public should be consulted in pre-planning for emergencies;
- Belief the public should have a role to play in emergency response;
- Explicit Emergency Management reference in a Chief Executive's job description;
- Belief Best Value could enhance local government's decision making;
- Perceived need for change in local government service delivery;
- Perception of service consistency across the UK;
- Perception that a national Emergency Management Unit is unnecessary;
- Level of support for national Emergency Management Inspectorate;
- Belief regarding who should provide the service in the future;

Perception of service integration into authority's corporate aims and objectives:

- Belief regarding who should provide the service in the future;

Perceived Chief Officer support for the service and:

- Perception of Elected Member supportiveness of the service;

<p>Level of support for national Emergency Management Inspectorate and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belief regarding who should provide the service in the future;</li> </ul> <p>Level of support for national performance indicators and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belief regarding who should provide the service in the future;</li> </ul> <p>Level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception of current working boundaries;</li> <li>• Service working towards Best Value ahead of legislation;</li> <li>• Belief a national stand-alone Emergency Management Unit would provide the most effective form of service;</li> <li>• Belief a national stand-alone Emergency Management Unit is unnecessary;</li> <li>• Perception of wider regional working boundaries;</li> <li>• Perception the service can be improved by Best Value;</li> </ul> <p>Level of confidence in community awareness of the service and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit Emergency Management reference in a Chief Executive's job description;</li> <li>• Perception of Elected Member supportiveness of the service;</li> </ul> <p>Belief Emergency Plans would be effective if understood by the public and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception that Emergency Plans should be public documents;</li> </ul>
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Table 6.10.: Significant Associations

Of equal importance during the hypothesis testing was the identification of instances where no statistical significance existed, as shown in Table 6.11.

No Statistically Significant Associations

Civil Defence Grant status and:

- Explicit Emergency Management reference in Chief Executive's job description;

Level of confidence in community awareness of the service;

- Level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs;
- Perception the service can be improved by Best Value;
- Perception of service consistency across the UK;

Making an in-house financial contribution towards the service and:

- Perception of current level of Civil Defence Grant;
- Belief Best Value only achievable if new civil protection legislation is enacted;

Level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and:

- Belief funding should be allocated according to a Risk/Benefit analysis;
- Belief Best Value only achievable if new civil protection legislation is enacted;
- Belief a national stand-alone Emergency Management Unit would provide the most effective form of service;
- Perceived role of public in emergency response;

Local authority structure and:

- Perceived need for change in local government decision making;
- Perception of current working boundaries;
- Perception of wider regional working boundaries;
- Perception that Emergency Plans should be public documents;

Perception of role of external funding and sponsorship in future service delivery and:

- Perception of new Civil Defence Grant formula;
- Perception of current level of Civil Defence Grant;

Support for national performance indicators and:

- Service working towards Best Value ahead of legislation;

Perception of current working boundaries and:

- Perceived consistency of service delivery across the UK;

Perceived local community understanding of the authority's role before, during and after an emergency and:

- Civil Defence Grant status;
- Belief Best Value could improve the service;
- Service working towards Best Value ahead of legislation;

Perception of public involvement in pre-planning for emergencies:

- Level of confidence that public are aware of service;
- Understanding of Best Value principles;
- Perceived need for change in local government decision making;

Perceived role of the public in emergency response and:

- Perception of change being necessary in local government service delivery;

Understanding of Best Value principles and:

- Perception that Emergency Plans should be public documents;

Table 6.11.: No Statistically Significant Associations

These findings which are arguably seen by the Emergency Management stakeholders as the key drivers and barriers to implementing an effective service must be addressed as comprehensively as possible in any Best Value Review and must underpin any generic approach adopted by the Emergency Management community in support of their Review process. For example, if a formal quality framework is to be applied to the Best Value Review process, it must account, wherever practicable, for these significant associations, and be responsive to strengths/weaknesses of the Best Value process as identified by the practitioners. An evaluation of existing quality framework models relating specifically to

Emergency Management will be provided in Chapter 7, together with a proposal for a bespoke Best Value support model.

### Follow-up Interview Findings

To support these findings, a series of one-to-one follow-up interviews were held with a selection of stakeholders who had, since completing the census, gained first hand experience of implementing a Best Value Review within their Emergency Management service to a Best Value Review. Six interviewees were identified who represented different types of local authority and had differing perceptions of Best Value, as shown in Table 5.10. These interviews were held for two purposes, to determine the perceptions of and experiences of each interviewee's recent Emergency Management Best Value Review and to evaluate a proposed support model for implementing a Review within Emergency Management. The adoption of a phenomenological approach in this part of the research allowed detailed qualitative data to be collected that could be used in part to assist in the definition of features necessary in a bespoke support model for implementing an effective Emergency Management Best Value Review process. The remainder of this chapter will present the findings of these follow-up interviews, with the exception of issues raised relating to the Best Value Review support model evaluation, which will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

A series of core questions, as discussed in Chapter 5, were asked to each Interviewee to elicit their perceptions of Best Value being applied to Emergency Management. The findings obtained to these questions will now be considered.

#### The Most Valuable Aspect Of An Emergency Management Best Value Review:

All interviewees were asked to identify what they perceived to have been the most valuable aspect of their Best Value process. Interviewee One considered the most valuable aspect had been the opportunity to actively discuss and challenge with key stakeholders why an Emergency Management service is provided and why it is provided in the way that it is. Interviewee One went as far as to state Best Value had put Emergency Management “*on the Chief Officer management team agenda*”. Interviewee Two cited the benchmarking aspect of comparison as being the most valuable because the Emergency Management service had previously been provided in isolation with no-one having any real idea of how it compared with the service provided by other local authorities. The Best Value Review had resulted in joint working, sharing information and developing performance indicators with other similar local authorities. The indicators are now being used in the absence of any national indicators. Interviewee Three identified two valuable aspects. First, the Best Value Review had provided the opportunity to reflect on the Emergency Management service by undertaking an in-depth analysis of the entire service. This found the service is led by the Chief Emergency Planning Officer and not by the Chief Executives within the local authorities. Secondly, the Review had been a good vehicle for raising awareness of the service both within the



authority and with external organizations. Interviewee Four believed the most valuable aspect of his Review had been the confirmation of what was already known, i.e. *“the Emergency Management service cannot be provided by an external provider because detailed knowledge of the internal workings of the local authority is essential in delivering an effective service”*. Interviewee Five was of the opinion the ‘compare’ and ‘consult’ aspects of the Best Value process had both been valuable. The ‘compare’ aspect had provided the opportunity to raise Interviewee Five’s understanding of how other local authorities provided their Emergency Management service. In contrast, consultation exercises were also beneficial because they had identified what other responding organisations thought of the current Emergency Management service provided by Interviewee Five’s authority. Finally, Interviewee Six felt there had been three valuable aspects to his particular Review; the support and involvement of both Chief Officers and Elected Members throughout the duration of the Review, the opportunity to set a template for the future delivery of the Emergency Management service and the opportunity to highlight where Officer time could be employed more effectively elsewhere. A considerable amount of Emergency Planning Officer time, for example, had been spent maintaining out dated E.C.N. and radio equipment rather than trying to identify and operate newer forms of communication such as satellite telephones and greater utilization of the internet. Interviewee Six commented his authority now has a new ethos surrounding the Emergency Management service as a direct result of the Best Value Review.

### The Least Valuable Aspect Of An Emergency Management Best Value Review:

All interviewees were then asked to identify what they considered to have been the least valuable aspect of their Emergency Management Best Value Review. Interviewee One cited several aspects. Interviewee One's Best Value Review had taken place under the umbrella of the Combined Fire Authority and this has inadvertently resulted in a false impression being given to the nine local authorities in the area regarding responsibility for the Emergency Management service. He cited the example that most of the local authorities were now under the impression the operational emergency response role of the service has now become the responsibility of the Fire Service. Although the central Emergency Management Team is based within the Combined Fire Authority, the 'responsibility' for the actual service still firmly remains with the local authorities. Moreover, given that the Review took place in the first year after legislation, the in-house guidelines and criteria for conducting a Best Value Review were constantly being modified and this resulted in time delays, making/achieving deadlines difficult for the team and in some instances resulting in duplication of effort. Finally, Interviewee One stated because the Emergency Management service had been reviewed as a stand-alone service instead of a cross-cutting service, it felt *"like we have only done half a Review"*, in that while the planning, liaison and training aspects of the service were fully considered, the operational response side of the service was not addressed at all. Interviewee Two believed, for a number of reasons, the least valuable aspect of his Review had been the public consultation exercise. The officer-in-charge of the exercise did not have any previous experience of undertaking such a task, and as a consequence, it

became a very time consuming and labour intensive process. Ultimately, the public consultation exercise was considered the least valuable aspect because the responses received did not provide any quality information as most replies were “*mid-ground*” by providing responses such as ‘uncertain’ and ‘unsure’. Interviewee Three felt the length time taken to complete the Review (nine months) was the least valuable aspect because, with the benefit of hindsight, the process could have been undertaken more effectively in a shorter space of time. Interviewee Four identified three non-valuable aspects of the Review. He considered the time taken to complete the Review was too great and this time could have been more productively used to actually deliver the service. He also believed there had been a requirement to produce numerous reports and he was unsure how this equated with efficiency. Interviewee Three also did not believe it had valuable having the authority’s Emergency Management Officer lead the Best Value Review because it was now impossible to say self-interest had not influenced the process and its outcomes. Interviewee Five considered neither ‘challenge’ nor ‘compete’ had been valuable. He believed challenge had not been tackled in an open and objective way with a wide enough remit. He also believed the scope and outcomes of the process were politically pre-determined before the Review even commenced and as such, the process was “*a fudge*”. The ‘compete’ aspect was also considered to have not been valuable because “*it felt like C.C.T. in disguise*”; if no external provider was identified one still had to be created in order to meet the criteria and put a ‘tick in the box’. Interviewee Five considered the greatest difficulty was in determining the potential values and costs of externally provided elements of the Emergency Management service. Interviewee Six considered a combination of being one of the first services in the authority to be

Reviewed, coupled with a lack of expertise in certain areas such as questionnaire compilation, made the Review process extra difficult. This was reflected in the fact an initial Best Value report presented to Interviewee Six's Elected Members was rejected for not being challenging enough and lacking ambition in future service delivery. Ultimately Interviewee Six believed the least valuable aspect of his Review had been the time commitment required for completion, especially at a time when the service was experiencing an unprecedented and demanding series of emergencies.

#### The Easiest 'C' To Apply To The Emergency Management Service:

When undertaking any type of Best Value Review, the local authorities are legally obliged to challenge the purpose of services, compare service performance, consult with stakeholders and compete with others (Sparke, 1999). 'Challenge', 'compare', 'consult' and 'compete' are grouped together under what is nationally recognized as being the 'Four Cs' and are in effect the framework of the Best Value Review process as defined by central government. All interviewees were asked to identify which of the four 'Cs' they found the easiest to apply to the Emergency Management service during a Best Value Review. Interviewee One considered the 'challenge' aspect of Best Value had been the easiest to apply to Emergency Management because it was straightforward to continually keep asking the question 'why'. Examples included "Why do we provide an Emergency Management service?" and "Why do we provide the service in the way we do?". However, Interviewee One was keen to stress whilst it had been easy to ask challenging questions about the service, it had not been easy to find the answers to all the

questions asked. Interviewee Two also cited ‘challenge’ as being the easiest but for a different reason. The ‘challenge’ aspect in Interviewee Two’s Best Value Review was tackled as the concluding part of the process as a means of analyzing the data gathered from the other three ‘Cs’; it was used to justify why outcomes were reached. In contrast, Interviewee Three did not consider any of the ‘Cs’ having been particularly easy because Best Value was a new process that had required a lot of thought in order to achieve all of the objectives. Interviewee Four stated both ‘challenge’ and ‘compare’ had been easy to apply. ‘Challenge’ had been easy because it was straightforward to ask questions challenging the purpose of, and method of, service delivery. Interviewee Four felt this had resulted in a golden opportunity to ask burning questions in a high profile manner. For example, a neighbouring Metropolitan Borough Council acts as the lead authority for Emergency Management in the area and in the event of an emergency would attend Police Gold<sup>5</sup>. The Best Value Review provided the opportunity to question how effectively this lead local authority concept would work if the emergency occurred exclusively in Interviewee Four’s area. ‘Compare’ was also considered by Interviewee Four to have been relatively easy as it had been possible by using the existing knowledge of the Emergency Management service to select a range of appropriate consultants and obtain information via questionnaire regarding how they provided their similar service in order to contrast it with the local authority’s service. Interviewee Five was of the opinion ‘compare’ and ‘consult’ had been easiest to apply. ‘Compare’ was considered easy because a neighbouring local authority’s Emergency Management Unit had already

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<sup>5</sup> Police Gold refers to the level of management, infrequently needed, which establishes the strategic framework within which the Tactical Commanders will work. The strategic level of management is normally located away from the disaster site at Police HQ hence the term ‘Police Gold’ (Home Office, 1998).

compiled a questionnaire and gathered the raw data Interviewee Five was then allowed to use and analyse for his own authority's Best Value Review. 'Consult' was also perceived to have been easy to apply to Emergency Management because it had been a straightforward process of developing an in-house questionnaire then distributing it to pre-identified contacts and analyzing the returns accordingly. However, Interviewee Five commented he considered a flaw in the consultation process to have been the decision not to include the public and that if the public had been included then consultation would not have been as easy to approach and administer. Interviewee Six cited 'consult' as having been the easiest to apply. This was because a comprehensive list of contacts already existed which meant once an appropriate questionnaire had been devised it was distributed to the pre-identified internal and external contacts (questionnaires were similar with slightly different slants for internal and external contacts). Interviewee Six felt the existing relationship with contacts was a key factor in obtaining a good questionnaire return rate. Interviewee Six stressed this consultation process had not included the public.

#### The Most Difficult 'C' To Apply To The Emergency Management Service:

In contrast to the previous question, all interviewees were asked to identify which aspect of the Best Value process they had found the most difficult to apply to their service. Interviewee One considered the most difficult aspect of Best Value to apply had been 'compete', indeed he considered it had been so difficult it had not actually been achieved within his Review. In other words, there was an admission a whole hearted attempt had

not been made to find competitors perhaps because of self-interest and political reasons. Interviewee One stated in his opinion it is not possible for an outside body to provide the Emergency Management service. While Interviewee Two did not find any aspect particularly difficult, he did feel ‘consult’ had been the most time consuming and labour intensive resulting in little valuable information. Interviewee Three believed, as with the previous question, Best Value was a new process requiring a considerable amount of thought but that no aspect was considered too difficult to tackle. Interviewee Four cited ‘consult’ and ‘compete’ as the two most difficult aspects of the process to apply. The consultation aspect of his Review had comprised of three different exercises being undertaken (involving residents recently involved in an emergency, organisations that respond to emergencies and the authority’s Citizens Panel) and whilst all provided some good feedback, the process was very time consuming and the value of the data was questionable. For example, Interviewee Four felt the response rate from the residents recently involved in an emergency was very low (23%)<sup>6</sup> and he questioned whether they had enough prior knowledge upon which to make an informed opinion. The compete aspect was also considered difficult to apply because the service is multi-faceted and external organisations could only offer parts of the service (indeed it was found no external organisation could provide the operational side of the service) which dramatically reduced the options for future service delivery and improvement. Interviewee Five commented ‘challenge’ and ‘compete’ were both difficult to apply. ‘Challenge’ because he felt the approach adopted during the Review was too simplistic and deliberately avoided many difficult questions simply because they could only have

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<sup>6</sup> Interviewee Four considered 23% to be a low response rate. However, in research methods terms, considering Hague’s earlier definitions, it can be considered that a 23% response rate is acceptable (Hague, 1998).

been answered and addressed by central government and not the local authority. These included questions regarding the adequacy of current working boundaries and legislation. ‘Compete’ was also considered by Interviewee Five as being difficult. He considers attempts to protect self-interest resulted in only a limited outward investigation taking place to identify alternative providers. In effect, Interviewee Five believes the ‘compete’ aspect of his Review was not fully explored and the minimal work that was undertaken was only done to ‘put a tick in the box’. Interviewee Six perceived ‘compete’ as the most difficult to apply and he also considered as it had been so difficult it had not been fully addressed<sup>7</sup>.

#### Resources Used To Undertake An Emergency Management Best Value Review:

All interviewees were asked to define the resources they had used to complete their Best Value Review. Interviewee One reported a Senior Emergency Planning Officer had led his Best Value Review and during the nine months taken to complete the Review had dedicated 70% of their work time to the task with the Chief Emergency Planning Officer also dedicating 50% of their time to the Review. In addition, a Shire County Council officer, a Unitary officer and one representative acting on behalf of the seven Shire District Councils in the area attended Best Value Review meetings and made comments on all reports produced. A Fire Brigade administrative officer also attended Review meetings in order to take minutes. All costs for stationery, printing, public consultation exercises and officer subsistence came out of the existing Emergency Management

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<sup>7</sup> At a subsequent Best Value Inspectorate full inspection a recommendation was made that more work must be undertaken in this area.



service budget, i.e. no additional funding was made available for the Review.

Interviewee Two took eight months to complete his Best Value Review. The cost of his Review was approximately £12,000 (made up of £4,000 consultancy fees and advertising plus £8,000 for Emergency Management personnel time). The costs for consultancy fees and advertising were met from a corporate Shire County Council budget while all others were paid from the existing Emergency Management service budget. Interviewee Three stated his Best Value Review had taken longer to complete than originally envisaged.

During the Review process, the Chief Emergency Planning Officer and Emergency Planning Officers had acted as advisors and their time spent in this role had been paid for from the existing Emergency Management service budget. Interviewee Four's Best Value Review Team had consisted of seven local authority officers plus one police representative. For this Review, the Emergency Planning Officer acted as Best Value Review Team Leader and a former Emergency Planning Officer acted in an advisory capacity. Other resources utilized during Interviewee Four's Review included information from past incidents as well as speaking to other local authority Emergency Planners and appropriate external organisations. The cost of the Emergency Planning Officer's time, as well as those of stationery and printing were met from the existing Emergency Management service budget. Interviewee Five commented his authority's Chief Emergency Planning Officer had acted as the Best Value Review team leader, a role that included chairing team meetings and writing appropriate reports. In the initial stages of this Review no other resources were used, however, when it became apparent a redundancy was to be made, all Emergency Planning Officers were considered to be service stakeholders and became involved in the Review by giving their opinions. All

staff time dedicated to Interviewee Five's Review was funded from the Emergency Management service budget. Interviewee Five stated the workload involved in the Review was large and it consumed a considerable amount of staff time (and therefore ultimately money). Interviewee Six explained his entire Review had been led in-house, i.e. Part One was undertaken by the Chief Emergency Planning Officer and Part Two by the Senior Emergency Planning Officer. All Emergency Planning Officers inputted into the Review process by being involved in making enquiries, designing questionnaires and undertaking research. All costs associated with Interviewee Six's Review were met from the service's existing budget, i.e. no extra funds or staff were made available.

All interviewees were asked whether they believed the level of resource available to them had been appropriate for what they wanted to do during the Review. Interviewee One felt the level of resource given to his Review had been appropriate. However, he acknowledged the staffing resources had been high as one and a half officers from a team of seven officers had dedicated their time to the Best Value Review. This equated to 21% of the service's total officer time being spent actively participating in the Best Value Review. Interviewee One acknowledged even if more resources had been made available for the Review, the outcomes would have remained the same. Similarly, Interviewee Two also was of the opinion that despite the Review having been demanding the level of resource had been appropriate. In contrast, Interviewee Three considered with the benefit of hindsight because the service had been reviewed as a single service it would be fair to describe the Review process as having been *"using a sledge hammer to crack a nut"*. This is especially apparent when considering the costs incurred during the Review in

comparison to the size of the actual service in relation to the rest of the authority.

Interviewee Four commented the level of resource made available for his service review had been appropriate and it had produced the “*desired outcome*” by identifying actions to undertake in order to improve the service. However, he did feel had more officers and time been made available then the issue of service performance indicators could have been explored and developed further. He also considered more support could have been provided by corporate services within the local authority. Interviewee Five stated quite clearly in his opinion the level of resource had been inappropriate. He felt with a longer timescale, administrative support and more Emergency Planning Officer involvement, the Review could have tackled the ‘real’ issues and ultimately achieved more, including public consultation. Interviewee Six felt the level of resource assigned to his Review could have been appropriate, but stated it was difficult to make an accurate judgment due to the number of emergencies which were on-going at the same time as the Review, i.e. resources were continually being juggled between actual emergency responses and the Review.

Interviewees were then asked to indicate to what extent the level of resource influenced the flow of the Review. Interviewee One reiterated all resources used during the Review came from within the service’s existing budget. The level of resource had been appropriate and had not dictated the flow of the Review. However, Interviewee One stressed had an emergency occurred during the time of the Review, then emergency response would have become the service’s priority and resources would have been taken away from the Review. He also stated had the Best Value Review taken place during

2001/02, it would not have been possible to dedicate such a high level of resource due to the unprecedented number of on-going emergencies within the area since November 2000. In contrast, Interviewee Two considered the level of resources had dictated the flow of the Review to a certain extent but believed there was no alternative way to undertake such a Review because as the Emergency Management service is very small and specialized, it was necessary for an internal officer to led the Review. For example, had an external officer led the Best Value Review they would have required much greater access to Emergency Management personnel time in order to gain a full appreciation of the service and its issues. He also stated while one Principal Emergency Planning Officer had dedicated 25% of his working time to undertaking the Review, his existing workload had not been reduced to reflect the Review which had resulted in a large amount of work being undertaken in that officer's own personal time. Interviewee Three was of the opinion the day-to-day service delivery did not suffer as a result of the Best Value Review but this was because no major emergencies were experienced during that time. During the timing of the Review, it had been possible to juggle deadlines according to priorities. Interviewee Four commented throughout the Review process there had been a continual juggling act in order to ensure the Best Value Review reporting deadlines and other Emergency Management service deadlines were met. He also commented several incidents did occur during his Review and the operational response always took priority. Interviewee Five considered the level of resource, coupled with the frequent amendments and changes to the authority's corporate approach to Best Value, did dictate the flow of the review, in that deadlines became shorter and only a certain amount of work could be completed within that revised timescale. He also commented the resources used to

complete the Review were not dedicated resources, e.g. all officers had other ‘full time jobs’ to complete which meant throughout the duration of the Review priorities had to be constantly re-assessed. He considered the Review had been demanding and stressful. Ultimately, he believed the Review and the implementation of its outcomes, seriously interfered with the normal functioning of the service by reducing its quality. Interviewee Six explained because his Review had been resourced by the Emergency Management service’s existing resources the flow of the Review had been dictated by two factors. Firstly, the number of emergencies occurring at the same time as the Review i.e. operational response was always the first priority which meant resources were taken away from the Review process. Secondly, it was questionable how radical the Best Value Review could actually be when it was led by an officer who has been employed within the Emergency Management service for the past 18 years. In other words; how innovative and receptive to new ideas is such an officer? Interviewee Six also explained he had originally approached his reporting committee to request an independent reviewing officer be appointed to lead the Best Value Review, however, this request had not been approved.

#### Improvements Achieved In The Emergency Management Service Since Best Value Review:

All interviewees were asked to identify the specific aspects of the Emergency Management service that had improved as a result of the Best Value Review.

Interviewee One considered his service had improved in three ways. Responding partner

organisations now have a greater appreciation of the Emergency Management service and local authority partners in particular are now more willing to participate and perform their role in the service. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer has now decided to run the Emergency Management service in a different way by concentrating upon managing rather than actual plan writing. Finally, Interviewee One's existing record keeping systems have been enhanced so they are not just number recording processes but have real meaning behind them. For example, rather than merely recording the number of times the Duty Officer pager is activated, the type of incident and response is now also recorded in order to identify trends and gaps in emergency preparedness. Interviewee Two was of the opinion his service had also improved. Emergency Plan production and amendment processes have been enhanced through greater utilization of information technology resulting in savings in printing costs, time, paper and storage requirements. Publicity leaflets for the public, Elected Members and emergency service control rooms have now been developed, printed and distributed as an on-going policy to raise awareness of the Emergency Management service. Interviewee Two also considered a major improvement was that the Emergency Management service's performance is now monitored via five performance indicators developed through active participation in a benchmarking club. These performance indicators will be introduced in 2002/03 to run alongside the Emergency Management service's quality assurance plan to ensure this does not become a number gathering exercise. For example, the interviewee considers it is better to train 50 people effectively than 100 people badly. Interviewee Three perceived his service has improved in four ways. The local authority is now linking the Emergency Management service with Risk Management as well as Health and Safety

disciplines in order to create a centralized Risk Management Group. The number of local authority staff trained to respond to an emergency is being increased. Performance measures are being adopted to demonstrate improvements in the service. Lastly, standardized training procedures, and an emergency procedures manual, have now been agreed and adopted by the Shire County Council and all the Shire District Councils in the area. Interviewee Three believed ultimately as a result of the Best Value Review his authority has a much better idea of what it is doing in relation to Emergency Management and more importantly why it is doing it. Interviewee Four was also confident his Emergency Management service had improved. Communication channels have been strengthened notably in relation to improved links with Business Continuity Groups and the introduction of debriefing following each emergency. Actual service performance has also improved as efforts are being made to fill identified gaps in the service provision, information technology is being utilized to improve procedures, more training is being provided and a training database is being created and there is now a greater sharing of information with neighbouring local authorities. Interviewee Four feels since the Best Value Review, the public's awareness of the Emergency Management service has also been heightened. In the long-term, Interviewee Four hopes the service will continue to improve once his authority has established a 24 hour call centre through which all Emergency Management queries and requests can be handled as well as regular information articles in local community newsletters. The Best Value Review identified Interviewee Four's service met 75% of the Home Office national standards for civil protection. The Best Value Review improvements identified (both for the short and long-term) will ensure the authority meets the standards in full. In complete contrast,

Interviewee Five stated his Emergency Management service has deteriorated as a result of the Best Value Review, citing whilst money has been saved in the short-term, he believes the quality of the service has been seriously reduced and in the event of an emergency this could have potential financial implications for the authority in terms of legal claims. Interviewee Five also believed the actions taken as a direct result of the Best Value Review have undermined the robustness of his Emergency Management service. Interviewee Six considers his Emergency Management service has improved in four ways as a result of the Best Value Review. The direction of the service has now changed from planning to management in that the authority is now proactive rather than reactive and the service is more focused, task orientated and managed. The profile of the service is now 'owned' by the authority in particular, Chief Officers and Elected Members have accepted their roles and responsibilities in the delivery of the service. The service is more focused as a direct result of core functions having been reviewed, challenged and amended appropriately, a consequence being that the Emergency Management service cannot be everything to everyone as there are times when it is necessary to say 'no' to requests for assistance. Finally, he stated his Emergency Management team now has a new skills base which no longer concentrates upon dated communications equipment but which looks at new and necessary areas of work including business continuity and public information. For example, a public information strategy is now seen as essential because the public's expectations are continually increasing in terms of emergency assistance and their need for information during emergency situations.



With the exception of Interviewee Five, all respondents were asked whether the Best Value Review alone had led to the identified service improvements or whether the improvements had been due to other factors or a combination of the Review and other factors. Interviewee One felt improvements had been achieved due to a combination of the Best Value Review and the wide range of high profile emergencies that had occurred both locally and nationally over the 18 month period prior to the Review. Interviewee Two also considered service improvements had been achieved as a result of the Review, which forced the authority to accept and do something about the need for performance monitoring, and central government's e-government policies that demand greater utilization of information technology in service delivery. He felt a substantial amount of the credit for improvements in the Emergency Management service should be directed towards Best Value rather than the push for e-government policies. Interviewee Three believed improvements were due to a combination of two factors, the Best Value Review and Exercise Senator (a large-scale Ministry of Defence exercise that had taken fourteen months to plan and had taken place during the Best Value Review process). Both the Review and the Exercise had highlighted aspects of the service that could be, and subsequently had been, improved. Interviewee Four stated Best Value alone was responsible for the subsequent service improvements achieved because it had been the vehicle allowing service weaknesses to be highlighted and ensure remedial action was taken. He felt previously Chief Officers had been unable to recognize and appreciate the problems of the Emergency Management service. Interviewee Six perceived the improvements had been achieved in the main due to the Review but he also acknowledged the lessons learnt from an unprecedented spate of emergencies which

occurred in the area as well as the appointment part way through the Review of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer as the Chief Emergency Planning Officer's line manager had also been positive influences upon improving the service.

#### Aspects Of The Emergency Management Service That Have Not Improved Since The Best Value Review:

All interviewees were then asked whether any aspect of their service had not improved as a result of the Best Value Review. Interviewee One considered although Best Value had provided the opportunity to identify weaknesses in the Emergency Management service it had not provided the scope to rectify all weaknesses. Interviewee One gave two specific examples. The Best Value Review highlighted the remit of the Emergency Management service is changing year-on-year, however, as a result of analyzing regular staff appraisals, staff attitudes and variations in staff workloads, it is clear several staff have reached their maximum potential and are not capable of developing any further. The Review also highlighted the local authority's role in an emergency remains unknown by most of the public through analysis of the number of times during an emergency when the public continue to contact the emergency services for advice and assistance. Despite these weaknesses being identified during the Review, it was not possible to rectify them, i.e. a raft of employment legislation reduces the options available to tackle the first problem and lack of central government action continues to make it impossible to tackle the second adequately as it realistically need to be done so on a national joined-up basis to have real impact. Interviewee Two cited two areas of his Emergency Management

service had not improved. First, Best Value did not allow personnel related issues to be tackled in that it is the nature of the Emergency Management profession that personnel tend to stay within the service for long periods of time or even until retirement, both of which have obvious impacts upon motivation, acceptance of new ideas/practices and result in few career opportunities for newcomers. Secondly, Best Value did not actually identify any ways in which Emergency Plans themselves could be improved since the benchmarking activity focused upon statistical comparisons rather than identifying and sharing good practice. Interviewee Three believes despite the Review the Emergency Management service remains under-resourced in terms of staffing and finance even though the service's workload is continually increasing. For example, whilst several years ago his service comprised of nine officers, there are now four officers<sup>8</sup>.

Interviewee Three also commented funding is set and distributed at a national level and neither of these factors appear to be influenced in any way by the outcomes of local authority Emergency Management Best Value Reviews. Interviewee Four recommended the issue of the Emergency Management service inter-facing with external providers was not improved as a result of the Review because this issue was not fully addressed and therefore remains ambiguous. The outcome of his Best Value Review was to dismiss the service being provided by an external provider, however, this leaves unanswered the question of 'what is the role of external providers in the future?'. Interviewee Five cited seven aspects of the Emergency Management service that have changed as a result of the

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<sup>8</sup> Under a proposed new organizational structure, the service will have three officers with responsibility for Emergency Management. The main perceived arguments for the new structure is the benefit of synergy and economies of scale by merging with Risk Management and Health and Safety disciplines. The new Unit would be located in the main County Hall building which is perceived to have both pros and cons i.e. the move into 'mainstream' would raise the profile of the service, ensure full integration into the council's communication loop and direct access to chief officers. However, the accommodation is of a lesser standard and is open plan, possibly not suitable for the sensitive nature of some Emergency Management information.

Best Value Review and he believes each change has resulted in a deterioration in the overall service provided. The Emergency Management service had transferred from being an independent department within Shire County Hall to become an integrated section of the Fire Brigade thereby taking ownership away from the local authority and creating the potential for confusion as to the role of the Fire Brigade. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer's line manager has now become the Chief Fire Officer rather than the Shire County Council Chief Executive, i.e. this is perceived by Interviewee Five as taking the service even further away from the local authority. All activities deemed expensive were scrapped without a full assessment of their value or implementing any replacement and as a consequence, resulted in arrangements and procedures that are perceived by Interviewee Five to be not as robust as they were before the Review. Stocks of communications and audio-visual aids equipment were scrapped with no replacement communication channels being put in place. Direct links with parish councils were severed as they were considered unnecessary when in fact Interviewee Five claimed they provided a valuable link in the communication chain for getting information out to local residents. The cycle of plan review and amendment was lengthened resulting in the potential for Emergency Plans to be out in circulation containing inaccurate information for a considerable length of time before they are updated. Finally, the number of Emergency Planning Officers were reduced which Interviewee Five states has resulted in less workers to provide the same service. Interviewee Six believed the way in which his Review was undertaken meant the issues of outsourcing and consulting with the public were not fully addressed. As a result of a Best Value Inspection, Interviewee

Six has now been tasked with looking at both these issues in more detail in the subsequent financial year.

#### Auditing An Emergency Management Best Value Review:

All interviewees were asked whether their Review had been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate. Interviewee One explained his Review had not been audited by the Inspectorate and he had received no indication as to whether it would in fact be audited despite him making several calls to the Inspectorate seeking clarification. The Review undertaken by Interviewee Two was due to have been audited by the Inspectorate in August 2001 but in late July it was called off with no explanation as to why or whether the inspection would be re-scheduled for a later date. At the time of this follow-up interview, Interviewee Two had still not received any response from the Inspectorate despite trying to establish telephone contact with them. Interviewee Two described this lack of information from the Inspectorate as having a demotivating effect as a vast amount of work had been undertaken to complete the Review placing excessive pressure upon personnel with no subsequent response or acknowledgement from the Inspectorate. Interviewee Five was uncertain whether his Review had been audited by the Inspectorate as he has now retired from the authority<sup>9</sup>. However, Reviews undertaken by Interviewees Three, Four and Six had been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate.

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<sup>9</sup> Following this interview an investigation was conducted to determine whether or not the Best Value Inspectorate had inspected Interviewee Five's Review. No such inspection had been conducted by the Best Value Inspectorate.

Interviewee Three explained his Review underwent a ‘light touch inspection’, which entailed two Best Value Inspectors conducting a one hour and twenty minute meeting with the Chief Emergency Planning Officer discussing the Review. At the end of this meeting, the Inspectors explained a light touch inspection would not result in the Review being either scored or results being published on the Audit Commission website.

Interviewee Three believed this was a very demoralizing form of inspection as it did not analyse the Review in-depth, did not reflect the enormous amount of work undertaken to complete the process and most importantly did not provide adequate constructive feedback. Limited feedback was provided by the Inspectors in the form of a letter to the local authority’s Chief Executive along with their comments on the three other Reviews upon which they had conducted light touch inspections. The inspectors considered the Emergency Management Review had demonstrated close partnership working between the Emergency Management service, the voluntary sector and the emergency services. The Inspectors stated they would welcome future developments in partnership working as a positive way forward. They also praised the work undertaken as part of a benchmarking club in order to compare and develop performance indicators. The Inspectors stated there was no evidence within the Review that the level of staffing is clearly matched to the current service requirements and that the opportunity to explore competition during the Review had been limited. Whilst the Inspectors believed a clear action plan had been produced as a result of the Emergency Management Best Value Review, the majority of actions related to structure and processes rather than actual service outcomes. The inspectors considered the benchmarking work should continue and the profile of the service should be raised with Elected Members in order to establish

greater understanding and awareness. Inspectors believed the action plan produced as a result of the Review should deliver improvements in the Emergency Management service.

Interviewee Four's Review also underwent a 'light touch' inspection. This took the form of a joint inspection looking at not only the Emergency Management Review but also those of Closed Circuit Television (C.C.T.V.) and Out-Of-Office Hours Services. This inspection consisted of one Best Value Inspector reading each Review's final report and improvement plan then meeting with a selection of the stakeholders before meeting with Interviewee Four in his role as the leader of each of the Reviews. The Inspector's meeting with Interviewee Four lasted three hours. Interviewee Four explained the Inspector was happy with how the Emergency Management Best Value Review had been undertaken and only had a few minor points to make which he would incorporate into a written summary for the local authority's Chief Executive. However, at the time of this follow-up interview, no written feedback had been received by the Chief Executive. Interviewee Four said it was demoralizing after completing such a large amount of work to only have a light touch inspection and not a full inspection that perhaps may have resulted in a star rating and greater recognition of exemplar practice and performance. In addition, he also found it frustrating that during the three hour inspection meeting three very distinct and different Reviews were discussed.

Interviewee Six's Review was subjected to a full inspection by the Best Value Inspectorate, i.e. two Inspectors spent five days within the Emergency Management

service setting. Prior to the Inspection taking place, Inspectors examined the various documents produced during the Review. During the actual inspection, the Inspectors gathered evidence in order to assess what it was like to use the Emergency Management service and determine how well it works. Evidence was gathered via discussions with focus groups of Shire District Council officers and another focus group of stakeholders, as well as attending a course ran by the British Transport Police, visiting a local village to talk to residents, conducting telephone interviews with stakeholders, Shire District Council officers and Elected Members. At the end of the inspection, the Inspectors made two judgements in order to give the Emergency Management service an appropriate star rating. The first judgement was ‘how good is the Emergency Management service?’ and the second was ‘how likely is the service to improve?’. Interviewee Six’s service was awarded a two star rating, i.e. the Emergency Management service is good and is likely to improve. Interviewee Six believed there were both positive and negative aspects to the inspection. On a positive note, the inspection clearly identified the service’s strengths and the aspects requiring further attention. The Inspectors showed a good understanding of the Review process undertaken and the preparation work undertaken by Interviewee Six prior to the Inspectors visit resulted in the production of an evidence file that has now become a valuable resource in the form of a centralized reference source which is now continually updated, maintained and referenced. This evidence file contains information including organisational structure and details of plans produced. Interviewee Six identified also cited several negative aspects of the Inspection. It took a tremendous amount of time to organize the Inspectors timetable in advance of their visit. Several comments made by the Inspectors regarding the need for public consultation as part of a



Best Value Review seemed to be pre-imposed and they were not willing to consider and appreciate Interviewee Six's rationale as to why the public had not been included, i.e. the public do not directly receive the service therefore instead of consulting them Interviewee Six consulted those who we perceive to be service 'customers'. Finally, some of the quotes obtained by the Inspectors from stakeholders were misrepresented in the Inspectors final printed report. Overall Interviewee Six believed the Inspectors report was a fair assessment of both the service and its Best Value Review.

All interviewees, regardless of whether or not they had been subjected to an inspection by the Best Value Inspectorate, were asked to detail what internal monitoring procedures they had in place within their authority to ensure their improvement plans were implemented. Interviewee One explained his Improvement and Action Plan produced as a result of the Review was accepted by a panel of Chief Officers as well as the Combined Fire Authority. Following acceptance, the Chief Emergency Planning Officer now provides a progress report to the Fire Brigade's Corporate Policy Officer on a six monthly basis. Interviewee Two described how his Improvement and Action Plan was initially inspected by the local authority's internal audit section. Initially, the auditors queried the service's staffing levels as they were considered to be high in comparison to other local authorities. However, these levels were justifiable due to the high level of income generated by the service, and subsequently the plan was accepted by the internal audit section and progress reports are produced on a six monthly basis for the Emergency Management service's liaison Cabinet member and the Chief Executive who in turn update the authority's Scrutiny Committee. In contrast, Interviewee Three commented

his Chief Emergency Planning Officer is required to produce a progress report every three months which is then passed to the service's portfolio holder and the Corporate Management Team. Interviewee Four described how his Emergency Planning Officer is required to report progress to the local authority Corporate Management Team on a four monthly basis. Interviewee Five was unable to answer this particular question as he has now left the employment of the local authority. Finally, Interviewee Six explained progress is reported to the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, as the service's line manager, on an 'as and when' basis.

#### Considerations For A Future Emergency Management Best Value Review:

Each interviewee was asked what, if anything, they would do differently if they had to undertake their Best Value Review again. All interviewees commented they would do things differently. Interviewee One would tackle the Review as a cross-cutting issue across all of the nine local authorities in his area rather than as a stand-alone Review as part of the Fire Brigade. Interviewee Two explained rather than bringing in an outside consultant to undertake the consultation aspect of any future Review, he would continue to use the structured debrief format but work with in-house personnel to develop appropriate questions. In addition, he would explore the possibility of using in-house personnel or independent officers to deliver the consultation sessions. He believed these changes would result in cost savings without detracting from the quality of the actual consultation process. Interviewee Three said he would approach any future Review as a corporate, cross-cutting issue ideally on a multi-authority basis, i.e. efforts would be

made to ensure several authorities within the same Shire County Council area would undertake the Review together. In contrast, Interviewee Four said he would ensure any future Review was led by an independent officer (either from within or outside of his authority) who had no dealings with the Emergency Management service. He believed this would ensure a Review was undertaken objectively resulting in a much more 'honest' view of the service and the identification of greater options for future delivery. Interviewee Five cited three ways in which a future Review would be approached differently. Firstly, on the basis that the Home Office quality standards document (Home Office, October 1999) is intended to apply authority wide, then any future Emergency Management Best Value Review must consider the total contribution of the authority towards the service rather than just reviewing the work undertaken by the actual Emergency Planning Unit. In addition, when undertaking the comparison aspect of the Review comparative exercises with other authorities must include face-to-face interviews in order to reduce errors in data obtained. Finally, Interviewee Five said in any future Review consultation must take place with local residents. Interviewee Six re-iterated the need to consider who should lead any future Review because Emergency Management is an unusual area of work and whoever leads the Review must be both understanding of and sympathetic to the service and its unique characteristics. He also commented that as it is essential to draw upon the experiences and findings from other Emergency Management Best Value Reviews, it could be worth exploring the option of having Emergency Planning Officers from other authorities leading any future Review in his authority.

### Changes In Perception Of Best Value:

The perceptions of Best Value in Emergency Management held by Interviewees One, Two, Three and Six had changed as a result of undergoing an actual Review. Interviewee One originally perceived Best Value would not improve the Emergency Management service. This perception was based upon three assumptions. Because there were no national Emergency Management performance indicators, Interviewee One felt it would not be possible to obtain any meaningful and valuable comparative data. He also did not feel confident it would be possible to prove an Emergency Management service was currently being run competitively. Finally, due to the many grey areas surrounding Best Value at the time of the survey, he perceived it to be merely another central government cost-cutting exercise. However, following completion of an actual Review, Interviewee One's perception of Best Value has changed positively. This change in perception resulted from two positive aspects of the Review undertaken. The establishing of a benchmarking club with other similar local authorities has resulted in obtaining a wealth of valid and meaningful comparative data. Moreover, the service was seen to improve as a result of the Review because shortcomings were highlighted and actions were agreed in order to rectify them. In contrast, Interviewee Two was originally unsure whether Best Value would improve the Emergency Management service because he was unsure at the time of this research as to what Best Value actually entailed and how the process would be tackled. Following the completion of his Review, Interviewee Two now believes Best Value has improved the service. This positive change in perception is due to the fact measurable savings within the Emergency Management service have been achieved while

at the same time as providing the service in a more efficient way, e.g. through greater utilization of information technology. Interviewee Three was originally positive towards Best Value in the service. Following completion of a Review, he indicated in his follow-up questionnaire return he was uncertain whether or not the service had improved because the Best Value Improvement Plan had not yet started to come to fruition. However, during the follow-up interview Interviewee Three explained benefits are now being seen from the Review and he is confident the remainder of the Improvement Plan will also be actioned effectively. Interviewee Six was originally skeptical of Best Value as he perceived it to be just another bureaucratic, non-precise process in which he had very little confidence that it would result in positive outcomes. However, since completing his Review, Interviewee Six now has a more positive perception of Best Value in Emergency Management. He believes Best Value has enabled change that was absolutely vital to the service's progress in that it has enabled real issues to be brought to a head and then tackled and resolved. He believed his service is now in a much better position to deal with the future as real and meaningful change has been achieved. For example, the service is now 'owned', expectations of the service have increased and ultimately the professional standing of the service has improved.

The perceptions of Best Value in Emergency Management held by Interviewees Four and Five before undertaking a Review remained the same after completing a Review, i.e. Interviewee Four originally perceived Best Value would improve Emergency Management and following an actual Review he was of the opinion improvements had been achieved; Interviewee Five perceived Best Value would not improve Emergency

Management and following an actual Review he still believed this to be true.

Interviewees Four and Five believed their perceptions had not altered as a result of the background reading they had undertaken prior to conducting their Emergency Management Best Value Reviews. Both felt they clearly understood the rationale behind Best Value albeit they were of differing opinions, where Interviewee Four had a more positive approach towards the process compared with Interviewee Five.

#### Additional Points:

At the end of each interview, all interviewees were given the opportunity to make any additional comments they considered to be relevant. Interviewee One commented the validity of comparative information supplied by other organisations must always be scrutinized to ensure all data has been supplied on the same basis, i.e. it is essential to ensure everyone interprets the criteria information correctly and consistently otherwise this can distort any subsequent comparison exercise. Interviewee Two voiced three additional comments. Firstly, mixed messages and inconsistent advice are being received from the Best Value Inspectorate to local authorities in different geographical locations. For example, some local authorities have been told Emergency Management should be reviewed as a cross-cutting issue while others believed it to be reviewed as a stand-alone service; some local authorities have been told Reviews must be subjected to a full Best Value Inspectorate inspection, whilst others received a light touch inspection. Interviewee Two re-iterated his earlier belief there should be a joined-up approach between local authorities who use the same service supplier so they undertake a Best

Value Review at the same time in order to avoid situations whereby a Shire County Council, several Shire District Councils and a Unitary authority all Review the service at different times during the five year cycle. He also stated Best Value is an on-going task and even when the Review has been completed, the Best Value principles and process are now being incorporated into the work of the Emergency Management service.

Interviewee Three commented during his service's light touch inspection, the Inspectors acknowledged Inspectors in different regions are tackling Emergency Management Best Value Reviews in different ways; some opt for full inspections while others for light touch inspections. Since Interviewee Three's authority was subjected to a series of light touch inspections, the corporate approach to all future Best Value Reviews has changed. In future, Reviews in his authority will be externally focused to ensure they result in improvements in the daily lives of users and the public, they will be issue based to avoid drowning in details, they will be cross-organisation where appropriate (where the authority cannot deliver improvements on their own Reviews will be undertaken in conjunction with other organisations) and finally services which are defined as being 'weak' will be tackled first. Interviewee Four described Best Value as having been a learning experience. However, on a negative note, he pointed out while he is the main driver in his authority for Emergency Management, he is also has responsibility for managing the authority's C.C.T.V. service. He was particularly disappointed the Inspectors did not challenge the fact that two thirds of his time should be spent on Emergency Management and one third on C.C.T.V. but in reality 75% of his time is spent on C.C.T.V. work and only 25% of Emergency Management. This makes it very difficult in Interviewee Four's opinion to spend time raising the profile of the Emergency

Management service. Interviewee Five was of the opinion that as a national review of Emergency Management was initiated during the first year of Reviews, all Emergency Management Best Value Review should have been postponed until the conclusions and recommendations of the national review were known. In addition, he also felt there was a lack of specific Best Value guidance for Emergency Management and that the service should always be reviewed as a cross-cutting issue with appropriate time and resources allocated to ensure there is serious investigation. He considered that it is not possible within local authorities to identify the performance of the top 25% of Emergency Management services in order to benchmark their provision. He believed this information gap could only be filled by the Cabinet Office producing performance indicators and collecting appropriate data annually which is then published so local authorities can compare their performance against each other in order to determine the effectiveness of their service provision.

#### Implications Of Results:

While all the Emergency Management Best Value Reviews of follow-up interviewees were tackled as stand-alone services, analysis has revealed several consistent similarities between interviewees as shown in Table 6.12.



Consistent Similarities Between Interviewees

- Challenge and compare were the most valuable aspects of a Best Value Review;
- The least valuable aspects of a Best Value Review related to difficulties in tackling a new process i.e. lack of specialist skills, constant revision of overarching guidance, the length of time needed to deal with the unknown and learn a new process;
- Challenge was the easiest C to apply;
- Compete was the most difficult C to apply because only a limited number of alternative service providers exist and none could provide the operational side of the service;
- The Best Value Review had been labour intensive and associated costs were met from the existing Emergency Management service budgets;
- It had been a difficult juggling act to respond to emergencies and meet Best Value reporting deadlines;
- The Emergency Management service has improved since the Best Value Review;
- The Emergency Management service improvements had been achieved as a result of the combined influences of the Best Value Review and other factors;
- The Best Value Review did not allow all identified weaknesses to be addressed;
- Light touch Best Value inspections performed by the Best Value Inspectorate were considered demoralizing as they did not reflect the full work undertaken during the Review process;
- Any future Best Value Review should be tackled differently.

Table 6.12.: Consistent Similarities Between Interviewees

Of the six interviewees, four had changed their perception of Best Value in Emergency Management since undertaking an actual Review because they were now seeing improvements in their service's performance. Similarly, it was interesting to note in

certain instances some interviewees held opinions that were very different to those held by the others, as shown in Table 6.13.

<u>Contrary Views Between Interviewees</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One interviewee believed the outcomes of the Best Value Review had been politically pre-determined.</li> <li>• Three interviewees believed the level of resource available during their Best Value Review had been appropriate. One interviewee said if more resources had been made available then more could have been achieved. One interviewee was uncertain. Two interviewees had conflicting views; one believed the resource level had been excessive while the other believed it had been inadequate.</li> <li>• One interviewee believed the Emergency Management service had deteriorated since the Best Value Review, stating it was not in a position to respond adequately to an emergency situation.</li> <li>• One interviewee believed that Best Value alone had improved the Emergency Management service.</li> <li>• One interviewee had undergone a full inspection by the Best Value Inspectorate and was happy with the inspection process and believed the star-rating awarded was a fair reflection of the Review.</li> </ul>

Table 6.13.: Contrary Views Between Interviewees

Appendix R contains notes of all follow-up interviews conducted.

### Applying Quality Model To The Best Value Review Process Within Emergency

#### Management:

As described earlier in this chapter, the results of the main issues raised in the census, the five key hypotheses and the follow-up interviews were used to assess the different issues local authorities could face when applying Best Value to Emergency Management. The feasibility of these issues being addressed by using either an existing quality management model or a proposed alternative will be discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN – DEVELOPMENT OF MODEL FOR APPLICATION OF BEST VALUE TO LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

### Introduction

Chapter Six presented the main findings from the survey of Emergency Management stakeholders with respect to their perceptions of Best Value. This chapter will present the arguments for the development of a support model that can be used by Emergency Management stakeholders to implement a Best Value Review. A range of established quality models will be assessed and arguments for the development of a specific tool as an alternative to these will be discussed. The process undertaken for the development of the bespoke model will also be discussed, including the incorporation of those key results identified in the previous chapter.

### Identification Of Existing Quality Models

Secondary research identified the former D.E.T.R. was originally responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of Best Value. Part of this responsibility included the publication of a generic Best Value framework as shown earlier in Figure 2.2., and discussed in Chapter Two. The framework that underpins Best Value in Figure 2.2. clearly identifies the key elements of Best Value by the ‘Four Cs’ of ‘challenge’, ‘compare’, ‘consult’ and ‘compete’. Whilst this framework and its associated legislation (‘Local Government Act 1999’) clearly stated what a local authority must achieve from a Best Value Review, they did not prescribe in

detail the process an individual local authority should undergo; this is to be determined locally by the relevant authority staff, using tools and processes they considered most appropriate.

In the census, respondents were asked to identify any quality management tools used within their authority. The six most frequently used were listed; ISO9000, Investors In People (I.I.P.), Charter Mark, Excellence Model, BS5750 and Balanced Scorecard (McAdam et al., 2002). The overall results obtained from the census are shown in Figure 7.1.

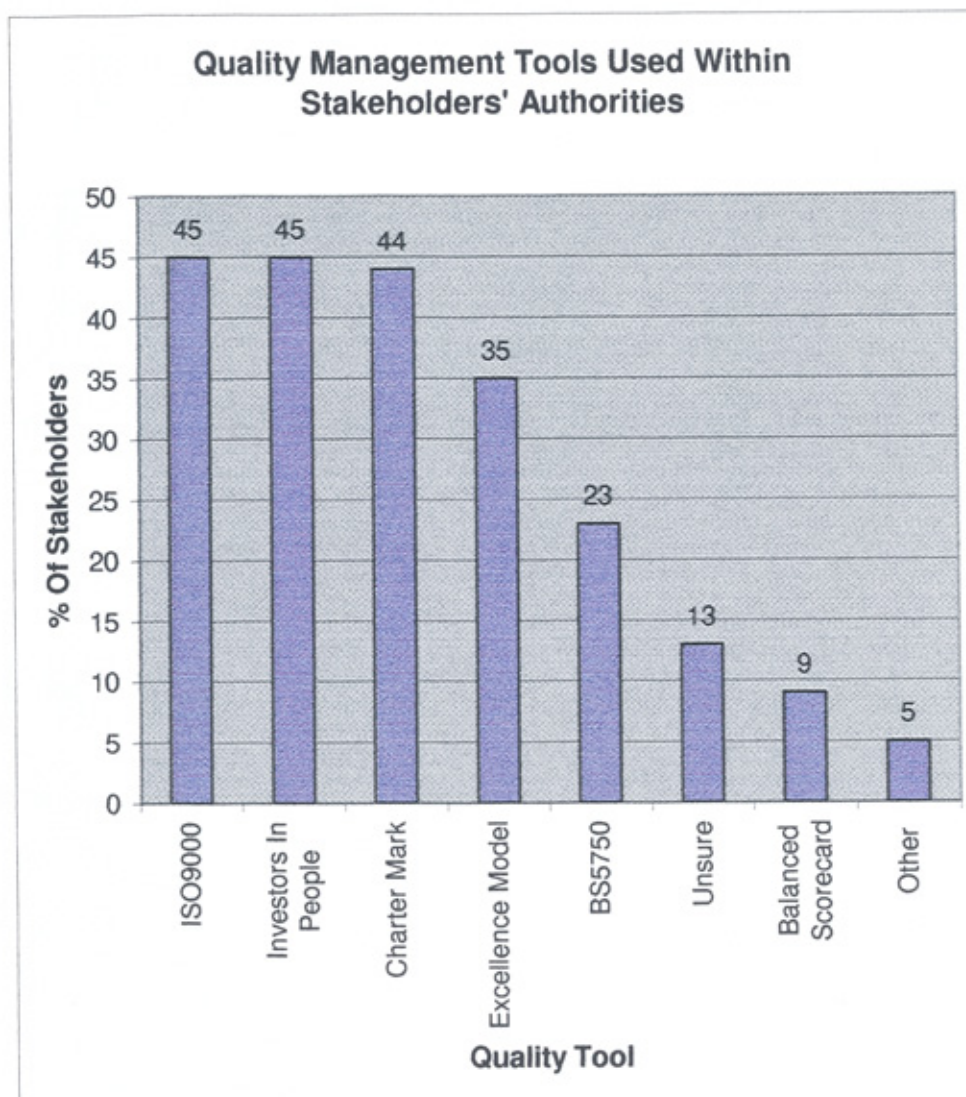


Figure 7.1.: Quality Management Tools Used Within Stakeholders' Authorities

The four most common quality management tools employed were identified as being ISO9000<sup>1</sup>, I.I.P., Charter Mark and the Business Excellence Model. This finding suggested many local authorities were applying recognised management tools when trying to improve their services. Indeed, the British Quality Foundation (1998) believed the number of initiatives aimed at improving quality were increasing as a direct consequence of the rising expectations of customers and stakeholders. In

<sup>1</sup> This originated in the U.K. as BS5750, the British Standard for quality management systems. ISO9000 is now the established global standard for quality management systems that support organisation and customer relationship (Cabinet Office, 2001). For this reason the author is keen to stress the term 'ISO9000' in the remainder of this chapter encapsulates BS5750.

addition, Sanderson (1996) claimed such tools were necessary as a direct consequence of central government attempting to control public expenditure whilst also raising public service standards. This raised the issue of whether the feasibility of applying each of the four most popular quality management tools listed above, to the Emergency Management service in order to ensure a robust Best Value Review. This decision reflected the belief held by Lewis (1998) that quality management tools were a central component in implementing and sustaining the improvements necessary under Best Value and wider public sector performance improvement. Research undertaken by McAdam et al. (2002) concluded public sector organisations which had implemented quality tools were able to demonstrate improved levels of performance, most noticeably after the first year of implementation.

A decision was made to discard evaluation of the Balanced Scorecard within Emergency Management Best Value Reviews at this point in the research for two reasons. First, the application of the Balanced Scorecard amongst survey respondents was low when compared with that of the other four previously mentioned quality tools. Secondly, the Government (Cabinet Office, 2001) defined the Excellence Model, Charter Mark, I.I.P. and ISO900 as being the four main quality schemes already in use within local government and were *“keen to encourage public sector organisations to use one or more of the(se) main quality schemes”* to deliver modernising government policy. The general strengths and limitations of ISO9000, I.I.P., Charter Mark and the Excellence Model will now be described, whilst their suitability and shortcomings with respect to the clear measurement of the ‘Four Cs’ (which defines the implicit structure of the Review process) and the substantive drivers and barriers to stakeholder perception will be identified shortly afterwards.

### Existing Quality Models Used By Local Authorities:

#### ISO9000:

ISO9000 is an international quality standard applicable to all types of organisation regardless of their size or work, and is considered to be a systematic framework aimed at ensuring products and services conform with the expectations of customers ([www.isixsigma](http://www.isixsigma), 2002). Currently, over ninety countries have adopted ISO9000 as a national standard, indicating a product or service purchased from an organisation with this accreditation comes with assurances of expected levels of quality ([www.isoeasy](http://www.isoeasy), 2002). To be granted ISO9000 accreditation, organisations are required to develop and implement their own quality system which is then subjected to an internal audit to ensure the system is workable. Once the internal audit has been successfully completed, an accredited external auditor is invited to evaluate the effectiveness of the quality system. Dependent upon successful external auditor's findings, an official certificate would be issued. Once a certificate was issued, an organisation can inform the public its products or services are managed, controlled and assured by a registered ISO9000 quality system. ISO9000 accreditation is maintained through continuous external audit.

#### I.I.P.:

I.I.P. is a national standard setting good practice for training and development of personnel in order to achieve business goals. The standard was developed in 1990 by the National Training Task Force in partnership with leading national businesses,



personnel, professional and employee organisations ([www.iipuk](http://www.iipuk.com), 2002). I.I.P. is defined as providing a national framework aimed at instilling in organisations a culture of continuous improvement by ensuring employees can do what the organisation requires them to do ([www.iipuk](http://www.iipuk.com), 2002). I.I.P. is based on four key principles, as shown in Table 7.1., which are further broken down into twelve indicators against which organisations are assessed.

<u>Key Principles of I.I.P.:</u>	
<u>Principle:</u>	<u>Requirement:</u>
Commitment:	Commitment to invest in people to achieve business goals.
Planning:	Planning how skills, individuals and teams are to be developed to achieve these goals.
Action:	Taking action to develop and use necessary skills in a well defined and continuing programme directly tied to business objectives.
Evaluating:	Evaluating outcomes of training and development for individuals' progress towards goals, the value achieved and future needs

(Source: [www.iipuk](http://www.iipuk.com), 2002)

Table 7.1.: Key Principles of I.I.P.

For an organisation to achieve I.I.P. status, it must review its current procedures to identify gaps and make a commitment to fill those gaps. At this point, an organisation is required to plan and undertake appropriate action to bring about the required change. Once I.I.P. status has been achieved, an organisation is required to maintain its culture of continuous improvement and undergo an external audit every five years to have the status renewed.

## Charter Mark:

Charter Mark is an award given by central government in recognition of an organisation providing an excellent and innovative service to the public. This award was launched in the early 1990s as part of the Citizens Charter initiative ([www.wyfcda](http://www.wyfcda), 2002). Its purpose is to raise the standard of public services by making them more responsive to the wishes and needs of their users. Any public sector organisation dealing directly or indirectly with the public can apply for this award. More recently, it has been extended to internal support services, voluntary organisations that provide a public service (and receive at least 10% of their income from public sector funds) and sub-contractors who provide a service to the public that is provided elsewhere by another public sector organisation ([www.chartermark](http://www.chartermark), 2002). The Cabinet Office state Charter Mark is unique amongst quality schemes because an organisation is judged upon the service the customer actually receives ([www.chartermark](http://www.chartermark), 2002). Indeed, the Cabinet Office ([www.isixsigma](http://www.isixsigma), 2002) claim seeking Charter Mark accreditation is a “*good discipline for reviewing a service from the users’ perspective*” and believes it has an integral role in modernising and renewing public services. The Cabinet Office (2001) also claim if an organisation can achieve Charter Mark accreditation “*it shows (an) organisation puts its users first, and that it is delivering a first class service and is going the extra mile*”. It has been argued by the Government the most meaningful awards are those awarded by customers themselves (Cabinet Office, 2001). The Charter Mark is the closest award to this type of accolade and its award is based upon ten criteria as shown in Table 7.2.

Charter Mark Criteria	
Criterion	Requirements
1 – Set Standards	Set clear standards of service that users can expect, and monitor and review performance and publish the results, following independent validation, wherever possible.
2 – Be Open and Provide Full Information	Be open, and communicate clearly and effectively in plain language to help people using public services; and provide full information about services, their cost and how well they perform.
3 – Consult and Involve	Consult and involve present and potential users of public services as well as those who work in them; and use their views to improve the service provided.
4 – Encourage Access and the Promotion of Choice	Making services easily available to everyone who needs them including using new technology to the full, offering choice wherever possible.
5 – Treat All Fairly	Treat all people fairly, respect their privacy and dignity, be helpful and courteous and pay particular attention to those with special needs.
6 – Put Things Right When They Go Wrong	Put things right quickly and effectively; learn from complaints; and have a clear, well publicised and easy to use complaints procedure, with independent review wherever possible.
7 – Use Resources Effectively	Use resources effectively to provide best value for taxpayers and users.
8 – Innovate and Improve	Always look for ways to improve the services and facilities offered, particularly the use of new technology.
9 – Work With Other Providers	Work with other providers to ensure that services are simple to use effective and co-ordinated, and deliver a better service to the user.
10 – Provide User Satisfaction	Show that your users are satisfied with the quality of service they are receiving.
(Source: <a href="http://www.chartermark">www.chartermark</a> , 2002)	

Table 7.2.: Charter Mark Criteria

It is clear from Table 7.2. the entire emphasis of the Charter Mark is upon how a service is perceived and received by the end user. Each criterion consider a service from differing perspectives, e.g. how effectively resources are used (Criteria 7) and how accessible a service is (Criteria 4).

## Excellence Model:

The European Foundation For Quality (E.F.Q.M.) Excellence Model<sup>2</sup> is promoted in Europe by the E.F.Q.M. and in the U.K. by national partner organisations: the British Quality Foundation, Quality Scotland, the Northern Ireland Quality Centre and Wales Quality Centre (Cabinet Office, 2001). The Excellence Model is a self-assessment model that can be applied in all business sectors to promote and manage continuous improvement. It is recognised as being the most comprehensive model for excellence as it is structured to co-ordinate and manage all initiatives aimed at improving performance (Lascelles and Peacock, 1996). The model consists of nine components being divided into ‘enablers’ (i.e. those factors concerned with how an organisation runs – leadership, people management, policy and strategy, resources, processes) and ‘results’ (i.e. what the organisation achieves in terms of targets and actual performance – people satisfaction, customer satisfaction, impact on society, business results). The British Quality Foundation (1998) state the Model is based upon the principle effective leadership (and is associated activities) result in customer satisfaction, people (employee) satisfaction and a positive impact on society, all of which lead to “*excellence in business results*”. The Cabinet Office (2001) believe the Model is a framework that assists organisations continuously improving their performance by ensuring they have clear linkage between their ‘enablers’ (the hows) and the ‘results’ (the whats) achieved. It is believed this model can cover all aspects of the organisation. It assesses both the organisation’s strengths as well as its areas for improvement. Innovation and learning are also now considered to be crucial to the on-going successful application of this model.

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<sup>2</sup> Referred to from now on as ‘The Excellence Model’.

### Assessment Of Existing Quality Models

In order to make an informed assessment about the suitability of each of the identified quality management tools being used during an Emergency Management Review, it is necessary to consider the key findings described in the previous chapter as well as the ‘Four Cs’ underpinning Best Value and the twelve principles explained in Table 2.3.

The census results in Chapter 6 revealed current inconsistencies in the approaches used by local authorities to perform the Emergency Management service, whom the service reported to within the local authority and differing levels of perception regarding service integration into corporate aims and objectives. These factors could influence how this particular service was perceived within its local authority. From these findings, it is clear any tool used during a Best Value Review should allow the method of service provision, as well as the position of the service’s reporting line manager, to be reviewed. The tool should also allow the perceived effectiveness of the service, including the perceptions held by the public, to be challenged.

The analysis detailed in the previous chapter revealed just over half the respondents believed their service reflected the needs of the local community, but only 37% of respondents felt confident their community was aware of the service. In contrast the majority of respondents had very clear views regarding the role of the public in Emergency Management. Any model used must assist a local authority in addressing public consultation; a key requirement of Best Value.

Comparison was another key component of Best Value, requiring local authorities to compare their services with not only other local authorities but also other appropriate organisations. The majority of respondents indicated there is currently no consistency in how the Emergency Management service is delivered across the UK. despite the majority believing Emergency Management arrangements between authorities should be capable of dovetailing regardless of differences in national and local laws and customs. Any approach used to assist a Review must give local authorities appropriate guidance on how to compare and contrast their existing Emergency Management service with the services provided by others. This is very important when considering the majority of respondents believe that in order to raise the standard of the service, both a national Emergency Management Inspectorate and national performance indicators are needed. In addition, the survey respondents indicated there was support for the creation of a national Emergency Management Unit to assist and underpin the work of the existing local authority services rather than as a complete replacement. This suggests central guidance of some sort is being sought or is seen as desirable but centralisation of the Emergency Management service is not considered appropriate. The absence of an Inspectorate and national indicators cannot be used as an excuse by local authorities to avoid comparing their Emergency Management services because they are required under the ‘Local Government Act 1999’ to subject all their services to all Best Value criteria.

Similarly, competition must also be considered within a review of the service under Best Value. This would not be a particular easy task for many Review Teams as Emergency Management was not a service previously subjected to C.C.T. and the vast majority of survey respondents had the preconception that Emergency

Management must be delivered by local authority personnel. This implied Emergency Management Best Value Review Teams required guidance to assist them in challenging the ethos and current service provided. The results presented in the previous chapter showed several strong beliefs regarding the funding of an Emergency Management service and portrayed a conflict between the desire for the service to be completely funded and the need to look for competing providers for some/all aspects of the service. If a decision support tool was to be applied during a Best Value Review, it must facilitate a thorough challenge of all aspects of the Emergency Management service and encourage stakeholders to be perhaps more responsive to new opportunities. For example, 60% of respondents had a negative perception of external funding and sponsorship being sought to support future service provision, despite central government strongly promoting the creation of public-private partnerships in order to deliver services.

The results obtained from the five key hypotheses presented in Chapter Six also revealed many factors needed to be considered when identifying the most appropriate approach to use during an Emergency Management Best Value Review. The first hypothesis considered the extent to which funding was a significant factor upon the provision of the Emergency Management service. Civil Defence Grant status was found to influence many things and it was implied from this hypothesis alone, those stakeholders whose authority does not currently receive Grant allocation were less likely to perceive they had ownership for the service. However, the literature review clearly showed there was the potential for an emergency to occur in any local authority area at any time regardless of whether Grant funding was received. These results identified stakeholders from a local authority making an in-house financial

contribution towards the service were also more likely to hold a number of perceptions. It was therefore concluded any framework used to support the implementation of a Best Value Review should be of a generic nature in order to be applicable regardless of an authority's Grant status or whether it made an in-house financial contribution towards the service.

The second hypothesis focussed upon the influence of current legislation. The findings suggested many stakeholders hoped new legislation would be introduced to the service clearly stating what was required of a local authority. The findings also suggested many service stakeholders were not entirely convinced new legislation alone would ensure that Best Value was achieved in the service. In 2003, central government stated new civil protection legislation was being drafted but gave no indication as to its remit, nor its proposed date of enactment. These findings imply the current legislative base for local authority Emergency Management is regarded as inadequate by its stakeholders and this could go some way to explaining the implied uncertainty from the census as to what the service should and should not be doing. Any model used to facilitate an effective Best Value Review should clearly identify the whole remit of the local authority Emergency Management service.

Analysis was also undertaken to determine the impact of national performance measurement upon the Emergency Management service. The literature review identified no visible performance measurement data was collected at national level and therefore the author believed it was perhaps at best extremely difficult for central government to make any objective judgements about the adequacy of existing local authority emergency arrangements. The analysis revealed the majority of



stakeholders believed a national body dedicated to Emergency Management could ensure the standard of the service across the U.K. was consistent, reflect good practice and dovetail with adjacent provisions, regardless of differences in national and local laws or customs in contrast to the current decentralised service where local providers operated autonomously from central government being solely responsible for their own relationships with neighbouring providers. In the absence of national performance measurement, local authorities will need to obtain their own data in order to be able to undertake the compare and compete aspects of a Best Value Review. Whatever systems are used to facilitate an Emergency Management Best Value Review, guidance must be given to stakeholders regarding the type of information to collect, how it should be collected and then subsequently used.

The influences of culture and organisation were explored in the fourth hypothesis. The majority of stakeholders indicated whilst service arrangements were not delivered consistently at present, they should be compatible in the future presumably to assist potential joint working and mutual aid. It was concluded in the absence of any national guidance, any systems used during an Emergency Management Review should try to, not only achieve all the requirements of Best Value but should ideally, result in the production of appropriate management information that could then be shared amongst Emergency Management professionals during future Reviews for benchmarking purposes. Such information exchange could be possible through either the E.P.S. or perhaps the Cabinet Office's Emergency Planning College at Easingwold. The results revealed a local authority's structure influenced many aspects of the service. These findings suggested any framework used to facilitate a Best Value Review should be generic in nature so as to be applicable to all types of

local authority, because authorities from all the various structures and locations have the potential to be involved in responding to an emergency and all are required under government legislation to undertake Best Value Reviews. The model, for example, should clearly identify all the questions that should be asked in order to consider the full range of issues that impact upon Emergency Management service provision, however, individual local authorities will then have the freedom to consider how the answers to these questions are to be found in-line with their own agreed corporate approach to Best Value.

The final hypothesis considered the influence of public awareness and understanding upon the Emergency Management service. Best Value required all local authorities to actively engage in consultation with their public regarding the delivery of services (Sparke, 1999). The majority of Emergency Management stakeholders believed there should be greater interface with the public regarding producing emergency arrangements, even though several acknowledged they had never previously sought public opinion and were unsure about the public's perception of risk. Several other findings were identified that appeared to influence this issue. For example, public awareness of the service seemed to be enhanced when a Chief Executive had an explicit Emergency Management role included in their job description. For these reasons, any model used by a local authority during an Emergency Management Best Value Review must ensure Review teams fully explore the issue of public involvement.

## Strengths And Limitations Of Existing Quality Models With Respect To Best Value

### Review:

At this point, it is necessary to assess each of the four identified quality management models. Once again, the application of the 'Four Cs' was considered in order to determine whether each model could realistically help a local authority to achieve successful implementation of a Best Value Review in its Emergency Management service, given that the Best Value legislation is written explicitly in terms of this measurement.

### ISO9000:

The benefits of attaining ISO9000 accreditation include the achievement of improved business processes, reductions in customer complaints and reductions in operational costs (Cabinet Office, 2001). ISO9000 is an internationally recognised standard and upon receiving accreditation many organisations are able to enter global markets as a result and find their level of customer demand increases. The purpose of this standard is to ensure an organisation's processes and documentation enable them to consistently meet the needs of their customers (Sparke, 1999). This is achieved by organisations having "joined-up" practices so all procedures are reviewed and documented so as to produce a quality manual and ensure an appropriate quality system is in place. ISO9000 has many critics as well as supporters. As a result of listening and considering many of the criticisms of ISO9000 in December 2000, ISO9001:2000 was published and is recognised as having "*a significantly increased application to the public sector*" (Cabinet Office, 2001). The reason for this greater

application is a reduction in documentation requirements as well as a greater emphasis upon effective process management and continuous improvement. In addition, the latest standard is now much more applicable to those ‘softer’ issues perceived to be more apparent in the public sector, e.g. customer change, continuous improvement and business process management. The basis for this standard is the “*plan-do-check-act*” continual improvement cycle (Cabinet Office, 2001). This standard can help an organisation ensure that its processes are managed so as to meet the needs of user plus any statutory and regulatory requirements. Table 7.3. outlines how an organisation must review its processes in order to comply with the Standard.

#### How To Review Processes In Accordance With ISO9000:2000

An organisation must:

- Identify their processes and how they are applied.
- Determine how the processes interact and how they will be managed.
- Ensure that the correct resources are available.
- Monitor, measure and analyse the processes.
- Ensure that the processes and the effectiveness of the quality management system are continually improved

(Source: Cabinet Office, 2001)

Table 7.3.: How To Review Processes In Accordance With ISO9000:2000

However, prior to publication of ISO9000:2000 there were many criticisms of the ISO9000 standard. The process to gain accreditation was recognised as being time consuming and expensive. For example, it could take anywhere from six to eighteen months to document business operations with a further one to three months needed to

verify against actual operations ([www.isixsigma](http://www.isixsigma.com), 2002). Campos and White (January 1999) reported ISO9000 “*(did) not allow for raising quality standards through learning, innovation and continuous improvement – the very essence of Best Value*”. It was also argued that the ISO9000 approach was much harder to apply to the ‘softer’ organisational issues of culture and human dynamics (Sparke, 1999). Whilst ISO9000:2000 does counteract some of this criticism, Elliston (May 2001) is critical of ‘awards’ that place emphasis upon the quality of the submission and supporting documentation rather than the quality of the actual service. He feels ISO9000 is a “*notoriously*” bureaucratic process and that many very average organisations have achieved this standard not for the actual service they deliver but for the way in which they document their procedures. Indeed, Elliston claimed a company producing concrete life jackets could gain ISO9000 status providing their procedures were documented and a complaints system for next of kin was in place. It has also been suggested ISO9000 can too often “*lead to heavy-handed usage, in that it develops a life of its own divorced from the needs of the service*” (Sparke, 1999). Fowler (1997) agreed by commenting “*ISO systems require a considerable amount of documentation and keeping all the records in order can too easily become an end in itself*”. This could be especially problematic if ISO9000 was applied to an Emergency Management service as a stand-alone department but not necessarily supported by the parent local authority organisation. When compared with other local authority services, Emergency Management is very small-scale in terms of resources (financial and non-financial) and if ISO9000 was applied (but not supported by the parent organisation) then the service would have to bear the associated costs and resources. Fowler continued this argument by commenting ISO9000 is about ensuring the achievement of a consistency in quality, by minimising variability rather

than seeking to achieve high quality. Dahlgard et al. (1998) considered there was a danger that once certified, an organisation's quality management system would be frozen and only improved in-line with improvements to the ISO9000 standard. They perceive two limitations to the ISO9000 philosophy. First, they believed it was not possible for the customer to specify their real needs and secondly, the needs of customers were dynamic. The costs associated with achieving ISO accreditation will be influenced by the size and nature of an organisation, but an organisation of 60-70 employees could pay £1500-£2600 for initial assessment and a further £1400 per year for audits (Cabinet Office, 2001). For the financial year 2002/03, an English and Welsh Single Tier local authority received a Civil Defence Grant allocation of £64,000<sup>3</sup>. From this allocation a local authority was expected to perform all aspects of an Emergency Management service. The findings in Chapter Six indicated the majority of Emergency Management stakeholders did not feel this level of funding was adequate. Working on the figures presented earlier (Cabinet Office, 2001), the costs associated with achieving ISO accreditation in an Emergency Management service would equate to approximately 2.3%-4.1% of the service's entire budget (the majority of which, if not all, is already allocated to staffing costs, overheads and updating of equipment with many Emergency Management services having to perform income generation activities in order to balance their yearly income and expenditure<sup>4</sup>) being spent upon gaining accreditation and a further 2.19% per annum for auditing.

Despite the perceived positives and negatives of ISO9000, many writers believed this standard provided an ideal starting point to achieving service improvement. For

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<sup>3</sup> This figure was supplied by the E.P.S.'s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group.

<sup>4</sup> This information was supplied by the E.P.S.'s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group.

example, Dahlgaard et al. (1998) claimed ISO certification reflected an organisation ‘does things right’ and should be regarded as a starting point towards Total Quality Management which aims to ‘do the right things’. The British Quality Foundation (1998) supported this view by stating ISO9000 could be a stepping stone towards a broader strategy of organisational excellence.

Whilst many organisations throughout the world have benefited from achieving ISO9000, Table 7.4. shows the positive and negatives of using such an approach.

<u>ISO9000 – Positive and Negative Aspects:</u>	
<u>Positive Aspects Of ISO9000</u>	<u>Negative Aspects Of ISO9000</u>
Improved business processes, e.g. better use of time and resources	Time consuming process
Improved consistency of service performance and therefore increased customer satisfaction, i.e. reductions in customer complaints	Expensive process
Reductions in operational costs	The focus is not actually on the level of quality of the service but on the achievement of quality consistency*
Increased customer demand (as result of entering global market and improved public perception)	Does not allow for raising quality standards through learning, innovation and continuous improvement*
Powerful starting point for organisational improvement	Can become a stand-alone activity in its own right
Has the potential to positively influence job satisfaction and morale	Organisations below a certain threshold of quality competence will find ISO9000 accreditation problematic
	Harder to apply to ‘softer’ issues of culture and human dynamics*
	Customer not always able to specify their needs
* Since the introduction of ISO9000:2000 many of these barriers have been addressed	

Table 7.4.: ISO9000 – Positive And Negative Aspects

Whilst ISO9000 was a recognised international standard, the author believed it was not currently appropriate to local authority Emergency Management for several reasons. The census results identified local authority Emergency Management is a service not delivered to a consistent standard across the U.K. and there are many differing perceptions amongst stakeholders as to how an Emergency Management service should be provided. This may perhaps explain why some Emergency Management service customers are currently unable to specify their own devolved needs. The literature review revealed there was little central government guidance in existence to assist local authorities in delivering such a service and the national quality standards were generic in nature with no specific performance indicators or national monitoring in place to support them. It was also argued many of the issues deterring the Emergency Management service from being delivered to a current consistent standard across the U.K. can only be resolved effectively with decisions being made and implemented at a national level. It would be very difficult for a local authority Emergency Management service to go from having no mechanisms in place for recording data and performing analysis to achieving such a rigorously demanding standard such as ISO9000 in a single step over a relatively short time period, particularly when considering their limited resources. This problem would be compounded further if ISO9000 were to be applied and funded by an Emergency Management service only rather than to the entire local authority. Indeed, it can take up to eighteen months to document business operations with up to a further three months being needed to verify this documentation against actual operations ([www.isixsigma.com](http://www.isixsigma.com), 2002) many local authorities would need to implement ISO9000 in advance of any Emergency Management Best Value Review in able to answer many of the questions raised by Best Value criteria. Such documenting would be especially



difficult to achieve for the operations aspects of the Emergency Management service that is not regularly activated. Another potential problem is the issue of public involvement in the service. The literature review and the census results revealed wide variations in the publics' perception and involvement with the Emergency Management service as well as stakeholders opinions as to what the publics' role could and should be. The question can be asked 'if customers are mainly unaware of the service, then how can they state their needs?' suggesting ISO9000 is perhaps too generic for Emergency Management services. In addition to this, the vast majority of the service's work involves the 'softer' issues of culture and human dynamics, both of which are more difficult to address when applying the ISO standard. Ultimately, whilst there are many positive aspects to ISO accreditation in isolation, it is not enough to help local authorities to achieve a successful Best Value Review of their Emergency Management services particularly in relation to the 'consult' and 'compete' aspects of the process. For example, as the public are perceived to be unaware, and not understand, the Emergency Management service they are currently unable to specify their needs and the ISO9000 model does not provide a solution as to how this 'consult' limitation may be overcome. This perceived limitation is a direct result of the current deficiencies within the composition of the local authority Emergency Management provision. Additionally, the focus of ISO9000 is upon the achievement of quality consistency and not quality of service which suggests the model will not fully explore the Best Value requirement of 'compete'. The focus is likely to be on delivering the Emergency Management service to a consistent standard rather than seeking to identify alternative providers who could deliver the service in a better way.

I.I.P.:

Investors In People UK cited many benefits of obtaining I.I.P. status; improved productivity, reduced costs, improved personnel motivation, customer satisfaction, public recognition and obtaining competitive advantage ([www.isoeasy](http://www.isoeasy.com), 2002).

Campos and White (January 1999) reported that I.I.P. was useful because “*effective quality management requires considerable emphasis to be placed on the development of staff*”. I.I.P. is a national standard for recognising effective investment in training and development of people so as to achieve organisational goals. It is based upon four principles: – commitment, planning, action and evaluation. These principles require a commitment from the very top of an organisation to develop all employees. The training and development needs of employees should be reviewed regularly and an action plan devised and implemented to best meet those needs. Finally, organisations must measure the effectiveness of their investment in training and development (Sparke, 1999). The British Quality Foundation (1998) regarded I.I.P. as a framework encouraging excellence in human resource development. They considered business performance could be improved as a direct consequence of developing personnel to meet organisational objectives, I.I.P. “*ensures what people can do, are motivated to do, matches what organisations require them to do*”. Elliston (May 2001) is however, sceptical of I.I.P. and questions how seriously organisations actually regard their personnels development once I.I.P. status is achieved. He considered many organisations were merely seeking to obtain the right to incorporate the I.I.P. logo into their letterheads. The arguments for and against I.I.P. status are summarised in Table 7.5.

I.I.P. – Positive and Negative Aspects:

<u>Positive Aspects Of I.I.P.</u>	<u>Negative Aspects Of I.I.P.</u>
Improved productivity/organisation performance	Could seek accreditation for the wrong reasons i.e. merely for obtaining the nationally recognised logo
Reduced costs	Once accreditation has been obtained there is the danger that an organisation returns to its former practices rather than continuing to include personnel and consider their needs
Improved personnel motivation (and possible reductions in staff turnover) through opportunities to innovate, greater involvement and more job satisfaction	
Increased customer satisfaction	
Public recognition	
Obtaining competitive advantage	
Places emphasis on development of personnel	
Better placed to achieve organisational goals through more focused employee training and development	

Table 7.5.: I.I.P. – Positive And Negative Aspects

Whilst many local authorities have already achieved I.I.P. status (some corporately and others on a departmental basis<sup>5</sup>), achieving tangible benefits and others continue to work towards accreditation, it will not ensure the achievement of Best Value if implemented in isolation. Even though I.I.P. is a nationally recognised, valuable tool for recognising that personnel are trained and capable to perform their roles, it would not provide local authorities with the opportunity to both strategically and operationally challenge many of the issues that need to be considered in order to fulfil

<sup>5</sup> There is no evidence suggesting an Emergency Management Department had gained I.I.P. in isolation from the rest of its parent organisation.

the principles of Best Value. I.I.P., for example, does not require the implementation of processes within an organisation which allow the questioning of why a service is actually provided, nor does it lead to the identification of other organisations that could provide services in either whole or part. It can also be argued whilst organisations with I.I.P. status will employ personnel who are appropriately trained and qualified to undertake their role, the I.I.P. process will not assess whether the scope of the actual service is correct or that a service is delivered in accordance with local community needs. Indeed, the question can be asked how is it possible for a local authority Emergency Management department to attain I.I.P. status considering the current ambiguity that enshrouds the service? For example, the literature review and the survey results revealed the current lack of clarity as to what an Emergency Management service should entail and how it should be provided. This begs the question how can effective organisational goals be set upon which I.I.P. then focuses? I.I.P. and the issues it addresses as a framework for workforce development (Cabinet Office, 2001) will add valuable input into any Best Value Review, nurturing people to do well and deliver a service. But this approach alone is not enough to ensure Best Value is achieved, particularly in relation to the 'challenge' and 'compare' requirements. Whilst striving for I.I.P. status will ensure an authority makes a commitment to identifying the current training needs of those involved in providing an Emergency Management service it will not require local authorities to fundamentally 'challenge' why they provide this service. Similarly, I.I.P. does not require local authorities to 'compare' their Emergency Management (or any other) services with those of others in order to make an assessment regarding either the effectiveness of their service delivery or the approach to training of their workforce. In addition, I.I.P. status is not dependent upon the need to allow for the in-depth

public consultation is expected as part of a Best Value Review. Whilst, for example, Best Value requires local authorities to consult with and identify the needs of the public in relation to Emergency Management service delivery, I.I.P. only requires users to consult with their workforce to identify their training needs and put in place procedures for fulfilling those needs to attempt to strengthen service provision.

### Charter Mark:

The aim of this award is to ensure continuous improvement in services by focussing upon service output rather than the processes used to deliver the service (British Quality Foundation, 1998). West Yorkshire Fire Service perceived the key benefit of Charter Mark is that it is based upon “*true partnerships*” between the service users and providers with both having a sense of service ownership ([www.wyfcda](http://www.wyfcda), 2002). With such high regard for the award, it is perhaps not surprising when congratulating the 698 Charter Mark winners, the Prime Minister stated when organisations are prepared to change and innovate in order to meet user needs, then the service user ultimately benefits ([www.number10](http://www.number10), 2002). The Charter Mark is based upon ten criteria, as shown earlier in Table 7.2. In order to be considered for the award, it is necessary for organisations to prove they meet all the criteria. Blundell and Murdock (1997) explained in order to fulfil the first criteria, assessors will expect to see evidence that standards are ‘precise’ which they define as being “*measurable and meaningful to users; brought clearly to the attention of the service users; are genuine, specific, user service standards and not just general standards or service or promises of service; have been set following user consultation and reflect what the user considers to be important*”. Organisations can obtain self-assessment packs in order

to check their performance and identify areas in need of improvement. A Charter Mark award entails expert scrutiny of applications (usually involving an assessor visit) that results in detailed feedback to assist an organisation in further service improvement as well as indicating whether they have achieved a Charter Mark award (Sparke, 1999). Many service improvements have been achieved as a result of the Charter Mark. For example, the UK Passport Agency, as a result of seeking Charter Mark, now offers a range of facilities for special needs customers, an appointments system for personal callers and the opportunity to make passport applications through selected high street stores ([www.archive.official-documents](http://www.archive.official-documents), 2002). A Charter Mark award is valid for three years at which point an organisation must re-apply showing that service performance has continued to improve (British Quality Foundation, 1998).

Some organisations have found it is not always possible to sustain the service improvements necessary as part of the Charter Mark. For example, when British Gas announced in 1995 it was to withdraw from the Charter Mark scheme<sup>6</sup>, Roger Freeman ([www.newsrelease-archive](http://www.newsrelease-archive), 2002), public service minister, said:

*The Charter Mark is a seal of approval, a recognition of excellent quality service, and if organisations are not serving the public properly they do not deserve to keep the mark. I regret that British Gas felt that they had no alternative but to surrender their Charter Mark. The Charter Mark is not won easily and not retained automatically*

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<sup>6</sup> British Gas won its Charter Mark in 1993.

The author considered this example indicated the Charter Mark discriminates between those organisations whom maintain ‘quality’ and those who do not. However, the author also believed this raises the question of what does an organisation do if its customers do not know what their needs are? The potential positives and negatives of this award are summarised in Table 7.6.

<u>Charter Mark – Positive And Negative Aspects</u>	
<u>Positive Aspects Of Charter Mark:</u>	<u>Negative Aspects Of Charter Mark:</u>
Driven by needs of service users	Customers do not always know what they want from a service
Builds partnership between users and providers	It is not always possible to sustain service improvements
Standards must be maintained to ensure that the award can be retained after three years	Not all organisations have customers who are members of the public
Award is subject to expert scrutiny	
Detailed feedback is provided outlining how services can improve	
The award is a standard of excellence not a competition i.e. there is no limit on the number of winners	

Table 7.6.: Charter Mark – Positive And Negative Aspects

The number of applications for Charter Mark status continues to increase year-on-year ([www.number10](http://www.number10), 2002) and the literature reviewed was generally positive towards the award. To achieve Charter Mark status, a service is required to set clear and meaningful performance standards and then publicise these standards and report to service users how they performed against them. This must coincide with a local authority telling users about the service in a clear and concise manner as well as consulting with them to identify their needs and suggestions as to how the service can

be improved. Services should be managed in a value for money way with staff being helpful, catering for special needs held by service users as well as dealing quickly with complaints. Overarching all of this, an organisation must strive to make continuous improvements to the quality of their service. It is clear to see there are strong themes running through both Charter Mark award and Best Value, most notably the requirements for public consultation and the need to monitor and report service performance to achieve on-going service improvements. The author considers any local authority Emergency Management service already with Charter Mark status could have a distinct advantage compared with those without the award when embarking upon a Best Value Review. For example, such a service would already have put in place a mechanism(s) with which to consult with the public and this could then be used during a Best Value Review teams subsequent ‘consult’ activities. However, the author also considered Charter Mark accreditation alone would not result in an effective Best Value Review for several reasons. The survey results described in Chapter 6 implied Emergency Management stakeholders perceived the level of public awareness, understanding and involvement in the service to currently be very low. It can be argued that without effective communication with the local community, their needs and concerns cannot be identified and then addressed. This reflects Blundell and Murdock’s (1997) concern that in order to manage resources *“economically, efficiently and effectively as possible”*, an organisation must have a clear understanding of the needs of service users. Whilst Charter Mark is indicative of systems being in place that could greatly assist with the ‘consult’, ‘compete’ and ‘compare’ requirements of Best Value, a Charter Mark holder may not be adequately placed to cover the ‘challenge’ requirement since the award focuses upon the results/outcomes a service achieves and is perhaps less focussed on the mechanisms



being in place within an organisation that allow the organisation to challenge the how and why (the aims, culture and rationale) that lies behind their service provision.

#### Excellence Model:

The British Quality Foundation (1998) supported the Excellence Model because they perceived it allowed organisations to identify their strengths and, in priority order as a result of scoring, their areas for improvement. The Foundation considered the Model allows organisations to focus resources in the most appropriate areas. Many local authorities were adopting the Excellence Model as the basis for their corporate approach to Best Value (Sparke, 1999). For example, Warwickshire County Council had initially intended to devise their own ‘service excellence index’ but when considering cost implications and time constraints, decided to adopt the Excellence Model instead. They have since found this model to be very useful, particularly in the area of cross-functional learning achieved as a direct result of the model’s all encompassing nature (Campos and White, January 1999). It is believed one of the key strengths of the Model is that it provides an overview of all organisational activities rather than just financial and customer service outputs including internal processes and resource requirements ([www.archive.official-documents](http://www.archive.official-documents), 2002). In other words, the Model helps to measure organisational performance overall as well as more detailed assessments of particular contributing elements. Lascelles and Peacock (1996) are very supportive of the Excellence Model because in their opinion:

*(Its) logic is simple: by improving the ‘how’ of a company’s operations (the enablers of leadership, policy and strategy, people management, resources*

*and processes) improved results will follow for each of its key stakeholders (financial, customers, people and society).*

Business Excellence Limited (2002) considered the Excellence Model to be an internationally proven “*outstanding framework*” that has the capability to improve any type of organisation’s performance and profitability. Another perceived strength of the Model is its emphasis on continuous improvement, a factor that is also central to Best Value; it seeks to identify performance baselines so areas for corrective action can be determined and appropriate improvement efforts put in place to them continually monitor and learn from progress (Sparke, 1999). A recent L.G.M.B. report stated by working through the Model, organisations will be able to demonstrate they are addressing three of the ‘Four Cs’ of Best Value, i.e. compare, consult and compete (Campos and White, January 1999). The ‘challenge’ aspect of Best Value in relation to this model will be considered later in this chapter. Another benefit is the perceived flexibility of the Model, it can be incorporated or adapted to work alongside an organisation’s existing quality initiatives without affecting consistency and achievement of quality standards (Sparke, 1999). The Excellence Model is regarded as a “holistic” structure into which other quality schemes can be fitted to deal with the area for which they are most suitable thereby ensuring maximum effectiveness is achieved ([www.archive.official-documents](http://www.archive.official-documents), 2002). Arguably one of the Model’s key strengths is that it is a form of self-assessment (European Foundation For Quality Management, 1999). The Cabinet Office (2001) perceived this factor led to organisations producing a “*realistic*” profile of their strengths and areas for improvement. To ensure the Model’s potential is maximised fully, it should be used by organisations regularly to continuously assess and review performance since this

will allow organisations to monitor and assess how effective they are and where appropriate make necessary changes. PriceWaterhouseCoopers (December 2000) were recently commissioned to assess the impact of the Excellence Model in the public sector. Their research found 56% of survey responders used the Excellence Model to drive improvements and take-up of the Model continued to increase between 1996 (11% of the survey respondents used Model) and 1999 (27% of the survey respondents used Model). Survey respondents positively stated the Model had helped them to achieve continuous improvement, improve strategic management thinking, link policies and initiatives, meet the modernising agenda, sustain levels of performance and ultimately improve the frontline service received by the customer (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, December 2000). Research by McAdam et al. (2002) found in the short-term organisations could quickly achieve positive results in terms of improvements in strategy development, business plans, operating processes and identify areas for remedial action as a direct consequence of using the Excellence Model. They also reported longer term use of the Model was attributable to performance improvement which suggests it is “*a key effective improvement framework*”.

When considering the Excellence Model in the context of Best Value, several criticisms have been voiced. The L.G.M.B. recently reported “*(the Model) is weaker on the fourth C – challenge aspect, which looks at why the service is being delivered in the first place*” (Campos and White, January 1999). The Board has also voiced concerns there is less emphasis placed upon ‘impact on society’ “*than might be appropriate for a public sector variant*”. Another criticism is the danger of over-reliance upon the model or a misinterpretation of what the model will produce, i.e. the

model is a diagnostic tool that will identify areas of concern but will not prescribe the remedial actions that should subsequently take place . Sparke (1999) explained the Model cannot be a substitute for a Service Review. It would not in isolation, for example, identify and determine how to rectify failing services. There is an additional danger also that existing levels of quality control within an organisation could jeopardise the effectiveness of the model's deployment. Sparke also considered it would be a misuse of the Model to only apply it to individual departments (or sections within a department). Instead, he felt it should be applied to the whole organisation to support a Best Value strategy as it is a measuring instrument and not a 'how to do it' tool. However, the Cabinet Office (2001) disagreed with this argument as they considered the Model could be used as either a strategic tool considering an entire organisation or looking at smaller units within the organisation to equal success, i.e. regardless of how the Model is used, it ensures a consistent methodology. A summary of both the positive and negative aspects of the Model's application is shown in Table 7.7.

<u>Excellence Model – Positive And Negative Aspects</u>	
<u>Positive Aspects Of The Excellence Model:</u>	<u>Negative Aspects Of The Excellence Model:</u>
Strongly encompasses the Cs of compare, compete and consult	Weaker on challenge aspect of Best Value
Identifies strengths and areas to address (which can then be prioritised)	It is perhaps a misuse to use it to assess small departments/sections of an organisation.
Considers in detail the inputs used to achieve results	It is probably a misuse to use it to assess small departments/sections of organisation should be applied to whole organisation
Is a self-assessment framework, not a prescriptive accreditation model	Little regard for public accountability
Can compliment other quality initiatives	Less emphasis on impact on society and does not assist in seeking public involvement
Considers processes and results – offers degree of forward prediction of performance	
Provides organisational health check, i.e. it is a diagnostic tool	
Internationally proven	
Central emphasis on continuous improvement	

Table 7.7.: Excellence Model - Positive And Negative Aspects

In summary, because of the perceived lack of understanding of the Emergency Management service, the Excellence Model alone would not be as effective as when it was applied to other more high profile and understood local authority services. The author's rationale for this view is now considered in respect to the key components of the Excellence Model.

### Enabler:

The 'leadership' enabler relates to the direction in which a service is lead, including the visibility of that direction, the resources made available and the monitoring of progress (Business Excellence Limited, 2002). This enabler touches upon many of the 'challenge' aspects a Best Value Review team could be expected to consider, e.g. how a service is managed, what resources are available and how progress is monitored. However, as the Excellence Model is a diagnostic tool and it will lead a local authority to challenge how an Emergency Management service is provided, it will not necessarily require users to 'challenge' why such a service is provided. This is a serious limitation in ensuring Best Value criteria is met, i.e. a local authority must challenge why and how it provides its services. Despite, this perceived limitation, a strength of the Excellence Model is it will highlight strengths and weaknesses in relation to the 'leadership' aspect of the Emergency Management service from which a Best Value Review team can start to consider how to go about building upon or improving. The Model, for example, may highlight many issues relating to the findings of the Emergency Management stakeholder survey presented in Chapter Six such as poor service integration into corporate aims and objectives or unclear reporting lines within the local authority. Whilst the Model will accurately identify the current limitations in the Emergency Management service provision, it will also highlight strategic issues beyond the control of the local authority in delivering an Emergency Management service for which appropriate mechanisms are not yet in place to provide solutions. Although, for example, the model will identify many issues in relation to long-term leadership issues, the guidance that forms the backbone of the Emergency Management service is perceived to be inadequate and does not

assist local authorities to develop a culture of continuous service development. The survey results described in Chapter Six showed that many service stakeholders considered the service was not resourced adequately, therefore, how can an authority ‘provide the resources needed to travel in the required direction?’. The absence of national performance indicators and service monitoring mechanisms have also been discussed in previous chapters. These absences make it very difficult for local authorities to ‘always measure and act on the results’. Overall, the Excellence Model will highlight the already recognised flaws in the leadership aspect of the Emergency Management service, but the author considers for the majority of these flaws, individual local authorities will arguably not be able to put in place appropriate solutions without national decisions being made at a central government level.

People are another key enabler in the Model, *“people need enabling in order to be effective. Without it they will never change, and neither will the business”* (Business Excellence Limited, 2002). This area of the Excellence Model directly relates to the ‘consult’ requirement of Best Value supporting the need to have two-way consultation with all service stakeholders to ensure all needs are identified and taken into consideration when planning service provision (Bowden, 2000). As with the previous leadership enabler, the Excellence Model by its very nature as a tool for diagnosing strengths and weaknesses in service provision will identify issues Best Value Review teams must consider when producing their final action plan for future service delivery. In order to enable all people (i.e. both Emergency Management professionals and non-Emergency Management professionals who could participate in emergency response), they must have a clear understanding of the Emergency Management service and their role within it. The literature review suggested central

government, including the Home and Cabinet Offices (the previous and current Department with responsibility for overseeing Emergency Management) do not fully understand the purpose of the service nor appreciate the role of local authorities in performing the service. Emergency Management Best Value Review teams using the Excellence Model will indeed identify many people related issues for consideration but may also find the mechanisms needed to provide the answers are currently not in existence (this is a weakness in the composition of the Emergency Management service and not a criticism of the Excellence Model).

The enabler ‘Policy and Strategy’ is *“based on existing performance data which shows the potential for possible gains and improvements”* (Business Excellence Limited, 2002). This particular enabler encroaches upon the ‘compare’ and ‘compete’ elements of Best Value, i.e. the need to compare performance data with other organisations in order to assess how existing service delivery can be improved as well as determine the current competitiveness of the service with a view to exploiting this status as much as possible. Emergency Management Best Value Review teams using the Excellence Model will be able to identify the current comparative and competitive strengths and limitations of their service in relation to those provided by others. The Excellence Model would indeed highlight these flaws in the make-up of the Emergency Management provision but currently Best Value Review teams would not be able to answer these questions without specialist service advice being inputted into the Review process.

‘Partnership and resources’ form another part of the enabler side of the Excellence Model, i.e. *“identifying and working with partners such as customers, suppliers, the*



*local community, and government agencies enables you to understand their needs”*

(Business Excellence Limited, 2002). The purpose of this enabler is to identify and then work towards fulfilling the various needs of service stakeholders, thereby complying with the ‘consult’ requirements of Best Value, i.e. local authorities should actively consult with all service stakeholders to identify their needs and consider these during the future delivery of services. As with the earlier discussed people enabler the Excellence Model will assist Best Value Review teams in identifying a service’s strengths and weaknesses in relation to its partnerships and resources. For example, it is likely the Excellence Model will identify that it is very difficult to currently determine the needs of the central government agencies and the public. However, local authorities under Best Value requirements must consult with the public suggesting considerable resource requirements are necessary in order to undertake this task, despite the previous chapter finding many Emergency Management service stakeholders believed their current resource levels to be inadequate. Whilst the Excellence Model would highlight this issue, Emergency Management services lack the resources to implement appropriate consultation mechanisms and address all the issues in relation to this particular enabler. Instead, many of these issues should be resolved at a central level with guidance and appropriate resources being provided to local authorities. Central government, for example, should prepare a public consultation strategy included in which would be a clear description of the role of the local authority in this process.

The final enabler was that of ‘processes’, i.e. *“the identification and understanding of your key activities ... it is essential to consider how these activities are managed, measured and reviewed”* (Business Excellence Limited, 2002). This final enabler

focuses upon the 'compete' and 'compare' aspects of Best Value and to a lesser extent the requirement to 'challenge' a service. By a Best Value Review team managing and measuring an Emergency Management service they will be able to begin to form a judgement as to how competitive their service is. When this data is then compared with the performance of others, a Best Value Review team can actually make an assessment of the current competitiveness of their service. To a lesser extent, the Excellence Model will require Best Value Review teams to challenge how they deliver a service but not necessarily challenge why they deliver an Emergency Management service. This lack of strategic challenge, as mentioned when discussing the earlier leadership enabler, is an inherent weakness of the Model in relation to Best Value criteria. The application of the Excellence Model as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review will undoubtedly identify many issues for Review team members to subsequently consider. For example, the perceived lack of service consistency across the U.K. and uncertainty on central government's part as to how the service should be delivered. For the effectiveness of Emergency Management to improve, many of the current areas of uncertainty surrounding the service could realistically only be resolved by decisions being made at central government level and implemented nationally throughout the U.K.. Such decisions could ensure the service became more accessible to the public and that they had an opportunity to input into the Emergency Management function. The removal of the anomalies in the make-up of the Emergency Management service could positively assist local authorities in endeavouring to improve the service on an on-going basis and ensure the questions raised by the Excellence Model could be addressed and answered, i.e. this reflects not a limitation in the Model but an identified weakness in the current Emergency Management provision.

When considering all enablers together the Excellence Model will provide Emergency Management Best Value Review teams with a wealth of information upon which a health check assessment can be made of the service in relation to the ‘compare’, ‘compete’ and ‘consult’ requirements of Best Value. However, the Model is weaker in relation to the ‘challenge’ aspect of Best Value; whilst it will highlight some information in relation to operational issues it will not tackle the more important strategic issues of challenging why this service is actually provided. Without this type of information, a Best Value Review team will not be able to identify the most effective form of remedial action to subsequently improve the Emergency Management service, i.e. some remedial action may not be possible as a result of current anomalies within the national composition of the service.

#### Results:

The Excellence Model will indeed identify the many flaws currently surrounding the service. It is important to consider how these flaws will impact upon the Model’s ability to produce ‘results’ (in relation to people, customers, society and key performance) to assist Best Value Review teams in addressing the ‘Four Cs’, i.e. people and customers and society results link to the ‘consult’ aspect of Best Value while key performance results provide ‘compare’ and ‘compete’ information. The enabler aspects of the Excellence Model combined will identify numerous Emergency Management service strengths and limitations in relation to the ‘Cs’ of compare, compete and consult. For example, using the Excellence Model as part of a Review will highlight comparative leadership issues such as current consistency in service delivery and performance management. The Model will also highlight ‘consult’

issues when considering both the people and the partnership and resources enablers. The processes enabler will provide Best Value Review teams with information regarding the competitiveness of the current Emergency Management service. The Excellence Model will, to a limited extent, apply a challenge criteria to a service in order to identify strengths and limitations relating to existing operational procedures but not to those that relate to the strategic issues that overarch a service. The Model, for example, instructs Review teams to challenge how a service is provided but not necessarily the more difficult task of why a service is provided. The author acknowledges Sparke's (1999) general concern "*(the Model) is not a substitute for comprehensive service reviews because the business excellence process will not, in itself, identify how to put right failing services*" and the perception this Model does not perhaps fully address the 'challenge' aspect of Best Value (Campos and White, January 1999). From this it is clear to see that Emergency Management Best Value Review teams by using the Excellence Model as part of their Review will be able to identify existing strengths and limitations in their service delivery. However, the Excellence Model will not provide Best Value Review teams with the answers as to how an existing Emergency Management service can be improved and strengthened.

### Summary Of Existing Quality Models

At this point it is appropriate to summarise the findings so far and detail in the author's opinion which of the 'Four Cs' are covered by the existing quality models discussed in this chapter. This summary is contained in Table 7.8.

<u>Existing Quality Models Coverage Of The ‘Four Cs’</u>				
<u>C/ Model</u>	<u>Compare</u>	<u>Compete</u>	<u>Consult</u>	<u>Challenge</u>
ISO9000	✓			✓
Charter Mark	✓	✓	✓	
I.I.P.		✓	✓	
Excellence Model	✓	✓	✓	

Table 7.8.: Existing Quality Models Coverage Of The ‘Four Cs’

ISO9000 required organisations to ‘challenge’ how they perform their functions (and to a lesser extent why) and then to focus in-depth upon how effectively those functions were provided (touching slightly upon the ‘compare’ aspect of Best Value), as shown in Table 7.4. earlier. However, ISO9000 accreditation did not, in contrast with other quality models, require organisations to ‘compete’ with those services provided by others nor to ‘consult’ with stakeholders about their services.

In contrast, organisations pursuing the Charter Mark award were required to fully consider the ‘consult’ aspect of Best Value and to lesser degrees those of ‘compare’ and ‘compete’ as well. The key emphasis of Charter Mark was to recognise organisations that provide services in the way users wanted them and to do this required an organisation to consult extensively with those users. As it is highly unlikely services can be delivered in a way to meet expectations of all users, Emergency Management stakeholders must ‘compare’ their services with others and determine how their services ‘compete’ with those provided by others so as to ensure as many needs as possible are being met. However, organisations seeking to obtain the Charter Mark award are not required to fully challenge the rationale behind

providing a service, they are required instead to concentrate upon ensuring the service they provide is delivered in-line with user needs (Table 7.2.).

I.I.P. is a recognition organisations are equipped to consider the ‘compete’ and ‘consult’ aspects of Best Value in relation to their services. Organisations needed to determine how other organisations provide similar services (‘compete’) and then, most importantly, ‘consult’ with employees to identify and make arrangements to fulfil their training needs so service delivery and competitiveness can be strengthened. It is possible to argue the ‘compare’ requirement of I.I.P. is weaker than the requirements of Charter Mark and the Excellence Model.

The Excellence Model requires organisations to fully explore the ‘compare’, ‘compete’ and ‘consult’ requirements of Best Value, i.e. the component parts of delivering a service. However, findings presented earlier suggest the ‘challenge’ aspects of Best Value is not explored in-depth in the Excellence Model. When considering these findings collectively, none of the existing models fully addressed the requirements of Best Value. This fact is perhaps not surprising when considering none of these models were specifically designed to deal with the application of Best Value to local authority services or Emergency Management in particular.

The appropriateness of a local authority using a multi-model approach by adopting two or more of these existing quality models in preparation for an Emergency Management Best Value Review, is an interesting issue to explore. McAdam et al. (2002) reported some organisations that had achieved ISO9000 accreditation, i.e. they had a “*discipline of sound documentation*”, were as a result better placed to

successfully implement the Excellence Model and seek Charter Mark status.

However, their results identified a clear preference amongst the public sector organisations they sampled towards the Excellence Model and I.I.P. as they incorporated clear performance measures which were wider in context than just finance. Indeed, they identified an emerging trend of the Excellence Model and I.I.P. being implemented side-by-side to achieve quality improvements with Charter Mark being used to improve customer related measures and ISO9000 to improve operational measures. Whilst the numerous strengths of all the existing models have been clearly acknowledged, owing to the relatively short timescales in which local authorities had to conduct Best Value Reviews and subsequently report findings to the public, it would not have been practical to expect them to implement a number of models during a single Review. In particular, such an approach would arguably be too unwieldy to apply to local authority Emergency Management services that have declining funding and resources. In addition, implementation will have considerable human resource implications because officers will need to set aside time to work specifically upon implementation. This will also have a significant impact upon the delivery of Emergency Management services, which as discussed in Chapter Three, have seen a steady decline in the number of dedicated Emergency Management professionals employed within individual local authorities. Indeed, many Unitary authorities only have one dedicated Emergency Management professional to undertake the full range of service activities<sup>7</sup>. In light of these arguments, whilst a combination of existing models could have fulfilled the requirements of all of the ‘Four Cs’, it was highly unlikely a local authority Emergency Management service with a small devolved budget and declining human resources would be able to

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<sup>7</sup> This information was supplied by the E.P.S.’s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group.

implement not just one but two of the existing quality management models as part of a Best Value Review. For this reason, the concept of developing the use of a combination of existing quality management tools to undertake an Emergency Management Best Value Review was not explored any further.

### The Need For A Best Value Review Support Model

The findings from the census strongly suggested many local authorities would find it beneficial to have access to a support model to facilitate an effective Emergency Management Best Value Review process. This was perhaps not surprising when considering neither the Home Office nor the Cabinet Office had made any recommendations to local authorities as to how they should undertake an Emergency Management Best Value Review. The assessment of existing quality management tools revealed, despite their numerous strengths and elements of best practice, no appropriate tool was already in existence to address the current levels of uncertainty and ambiguity in local authority Emergency Management services. Initially, developing a matrix was considered whereby a model specific to Emergency Management could sit adjacent to the various existing quality management tools. However, it became apparent this approach could potentially become very unwieldy in a service with a small devolved budget and declining staffing numbers. Additionally, this approach had the potential to cause unnecessary confusion for local authorities. A decision was thus made to develop a support model specifically applying Best Value principles to the local authority Emergency Management service. It was recognised from the outset the good practices identified within the existing four tools should be incorporated as much as possible into any Best Value Review support



model developed as part of this research. This fitted with the Cabinet Office's belief the Excellence Model was an overarching framework questioning all organisational activities whilst ISO9000, Charter Mark and I.I.P. were more specific and gave recognition to an authority's existing systems that had the potential to provide many of the answers to the Excellence Model's questions (Cabinet Office, 2001). The rationale for this approach also reflected research undertaken by Voss (1997) who discovered companies that incorporated best practice into their operations achieved superior performance. He identified the key elements of best practice as being leadership, organisation and culture, service design, service delivery and service value. Indeed, he considered all these elements of best practice were linked together and therefore should be continuously measured and reviewed in order to achieve service excellence on an on-going basis.

#### Developing A Best Value Review Support Model

A model is developed and proposed in this thesis that could be used as a self-assessment package to facilitate the implementation of a Best Value Review in the service. This choice was made in recognition that one of the main perceived strengths of the Excellence Model was its application as a self-assessment model whereby organisations can work through it in their own way, at their own speed, linking with other quality initiatives already in operation. It was recognised that owing to the complicated nature of both the local authority Emergency Management service as well as the generic nature of the Best Value process, it would be virtually impossible to develop a single-tier model encapsulating all of the issues relevant to an individual review. For this reason, a decision was made to produce a three-tier model whose

basic structure needs to account for the scope of the service provision and the key components of the Review process and whose substantive content is based upon the drivers and barriers identified by the Emergency Management stakeholders. The top-tier details the full scope of the local authority Emergency Management service. The middle-tier of the model consists of a matrix structure to focus upon how Best Value could be applied generically to each aspect of the Emergency Management service, whilst the bottom-tier details the precise questions to be asked and addressed when undertaking a Review for each aspect of the Review process, as shown in Figure 7.2. As the model develops through the differing tiers, it becomes much more focussed in applying Best Value principles specifically to each aspect of the Emergency Management provision. The starting point was to develop the top-tier of the model.

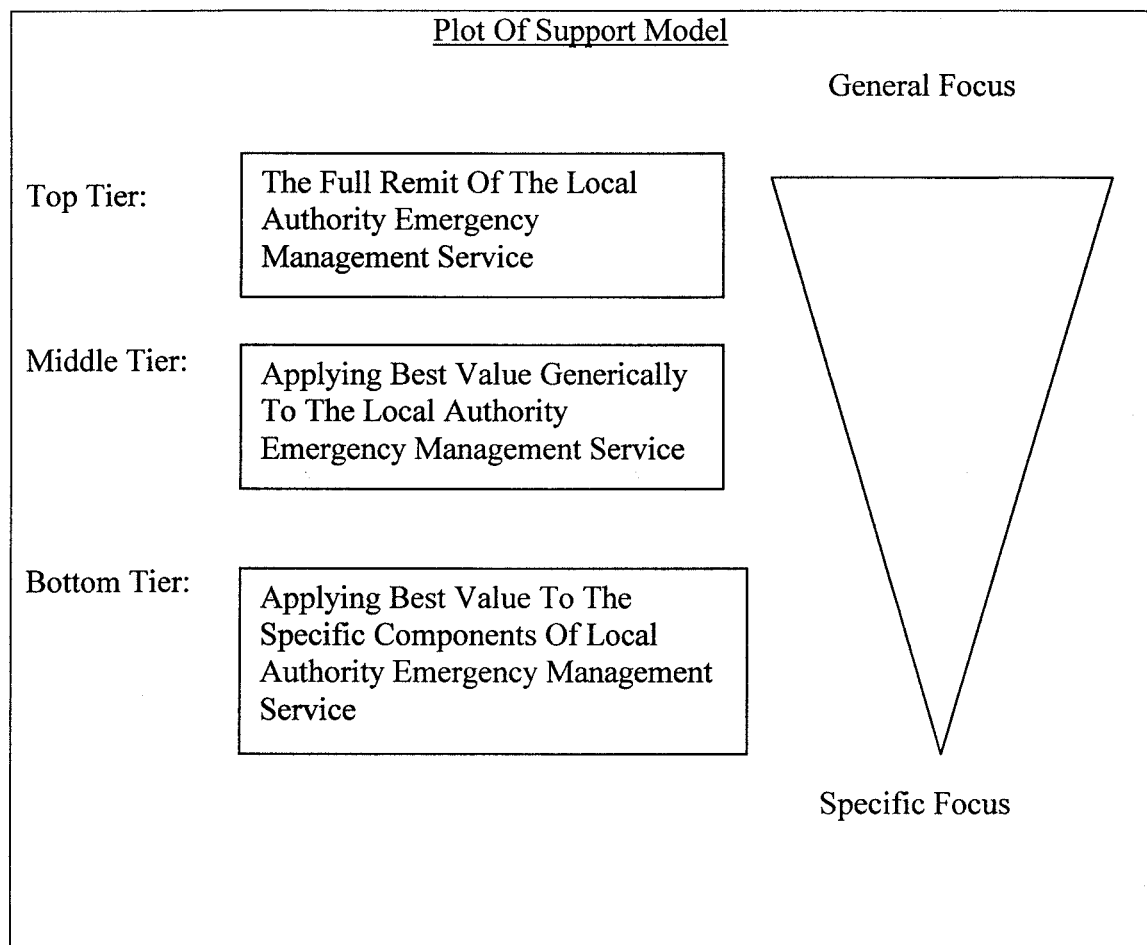


Figure 7.2.: Plot of Support Model

### Top-Tier: ‘Local Authority Emergency Management Processes’

The local authority’s role in an emergency was discussed in depth in Chapter Three. Whilst there is a central government guidance document entitled ‘Dealing With Disaster’ (Home Office, 1998) that suggests good practice and includes reference to the local authority role in I.E.M., this reference is neither detailed nor exhaustive in terms of the activities local authorities should undertake, the responsibilities they should accept and the factors that influence these activities and responsibilities. Indeed, this document has been heavily criticised by service practitioners and representatives from national bodies for its lack detail and clarity. Moreover, this research found there was no specific model of local authority Emergency Management already in existence, either within central government guidance documents or elsewhere. The literature review also considered the area of Risk Management. Risk Management is defined as the *“identification, analysis and economic control of those risks which can threaten the assets or the earning capacity of an enterprise ...”* (Griffiths, 2002). Several Risk Management models are in existence. These models assess the likelihood (i.e. frequency) of a risk occurring and the potential severity (i.e. impact) if that risk occurred, as shown in Figure 7.3.

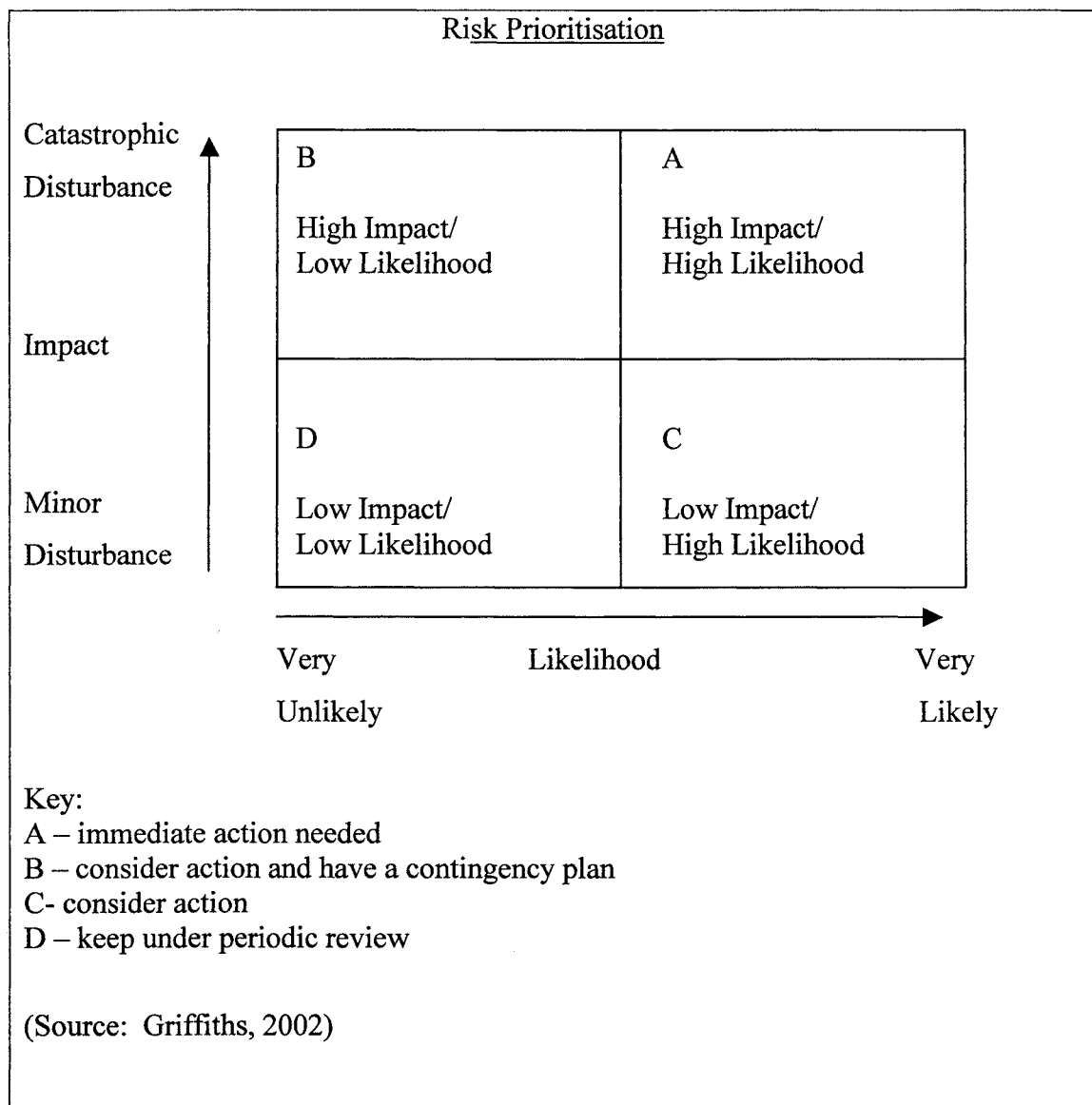


Figure 7.3.: Risk Prioritisation

The intended outcome of such a process shown in Figure 7.3. is to have scores assigned to risks so they can be prioritised and tackled. For example, a risk identified as having a high likelihood of occurrence and will result in a severe impact will presumably be assigned greater priority for mitigation than a risk which is found to be of a low likelihood of occurrence but have a severe impact. Many different criteria for scoring risks are in existence, some based upon financial impact as shown in Table 7.9., some upon quality, injury, reputational or litigation impact (Griffiths, 2002).

Risk Management: Example Scoring

<u>Score</u>	<u>Financial Impact (£ Million)</u>
1	Less than 0.5 million
2	0.5 – 1.5 million
3	1.5 – 3.0 million
4	3.0 – 5.0 million
5	More than 5.0 million

(Source: Batten, November 2002)

Table 7.9.: Risk Management: Example Scoring

There is currently no internationally agreed standard for Risk Management.

However, many countries are now utilising the Australian/New Zealand Standard

AS/NZS 4360 (Griffiths, 2002) which recommends the process shown in Figure 7.4.

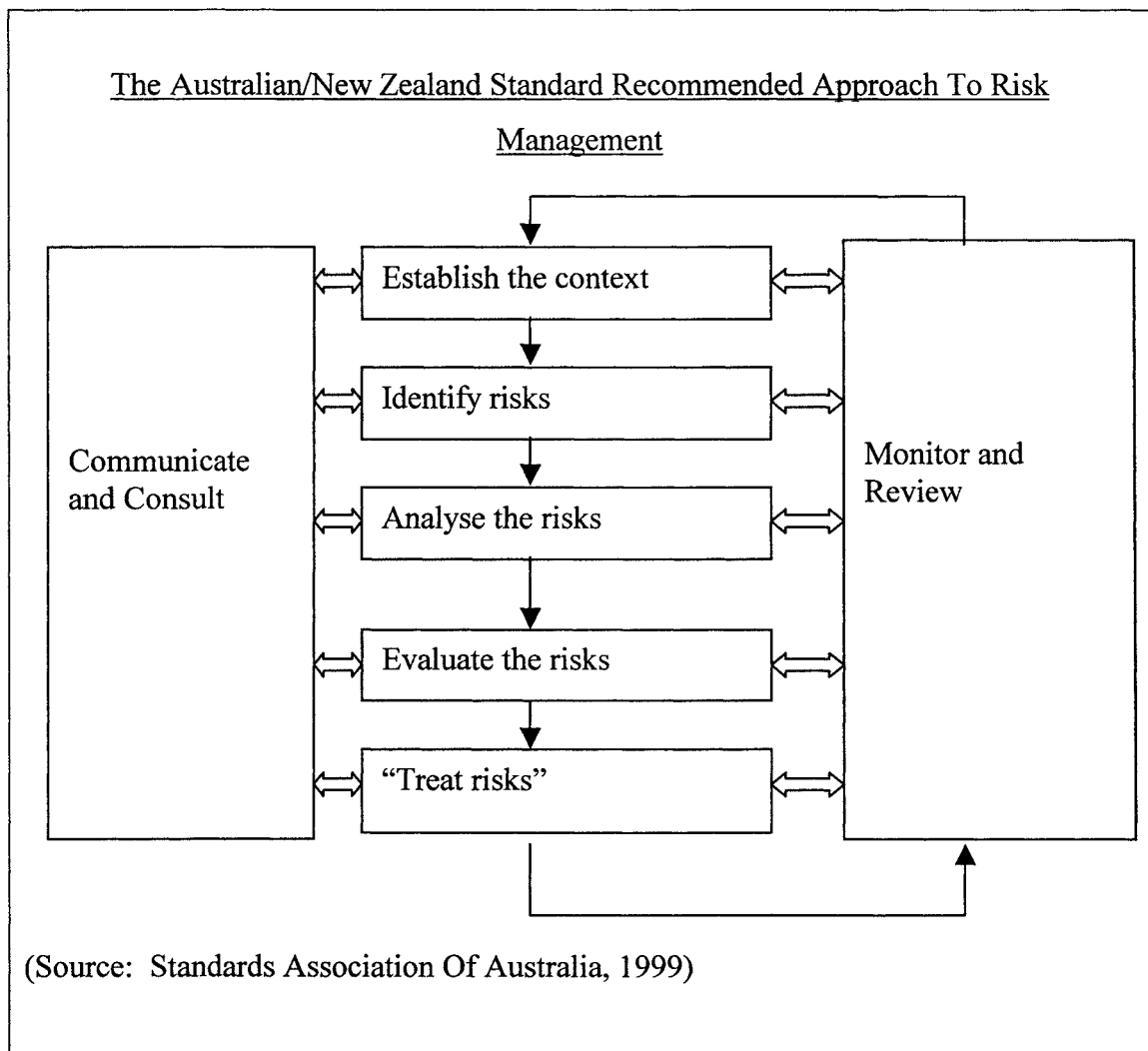


Figure 7.4.: The Australian/New Zealand Standard Recommended Approach To Risk Management

All of the Risk Management literature and models reviewed acknowledged risk can never be totally removed, however, they also recognised in many circumstances remedial action could be taken to reduce the level of risk exposure. Emergency Management and Risk Management are arguably two very different disciplines. Risk Management encouraged risk mitigation efforts to be focussed upon those risks that have been scored, analysed and prioritised. Risk Management also recognised there is a point when risk exposure cannot be reduced any further, possibly because it is not

cost-effective to do so, and the remaining risk must simply be tolerated and in some instances ignored (Griffiths, 2002). For example, if the Dumfries and Galloway Regional Council had undertaken a Risk Management exercise in August 1988, the outcome of the perceived risk of an aeroplane falling out of the sky and landing within their area, if even considered at all, would have been high severity impact but an improbable level of occurrence, and as a result, this scenario could possibly have been overlooked with focus being assigned to other more probable events. However, this very scenario did occur within the Dumfries and Galloway area in December 1988 when a plane crashed over Lockerbie and the local authority were one of the key responding organisations. Another example relates to the foot and mouth outbreak in the U.K. in 2001. The U.K.'s foot and mouth contingency plans prior to the 2001 outbreak were based on the most likely scenario and other scenarios were not considered, and as such was in accordance with European Commission guidance D.E.F.R.A.'s contingency plans were based upon the scenario there would be no more than ten premises infected with foot and mouth disease at any one time (National Audit Office, 2002). However, following analysis of the 2001 outbreak the National Audit Office, and the other national inquiry reports, found D.E.F.R.A.'s contingency plans were insufficient to deal with an outbreak on the scale of the 2001 outbreak and such plans should be revised appropriately. Both of these examples show while a Risk Management risk assessment would have deemed both scenarios as being of a low probability of occurrence, this could have resulted in them being overlooked or being assigned a low priority to tackle. The discipline of Emergency Management is based upon the principle regardless of the cause of an emergency the response to an emergency should be planned (Home Office, 1998). Whilst there are similarities between certain action and outcome aspects of Emergency Management and Risk

Management, e.g. detailing contingency arrangements, existing Risk Management models did not reflect local authority Emergency Management services. Thus in terms of explicitly stating the pre- and post-incident requirements of a local authority in assisting the community overcome emergencies an entirely new model should be developed from the outset.

Particular consideration was also given to incorporating the advice contained in the limited number of central government Emergency Management guidance documents. The criticisms raised by numerous service practitioners and academics in Chapter Four regarding the standard of central government guidance were overcome by building upon the advice by applying the findings of the literature review and practitioner-researcher knowledge. The literature review, combined with the practitioner-researcher's knowledge of the local authority's role, highlighted the scope of the service often termed by many as 'Emergency Planning' goes beyond just planning for emergency response. It was considered essential any prototype model produced must reflect from the outset this particular local authority service appeared to have two phases: 'a preparation phase' and an 'operations phase'. For the purposes of developing a comprehensive review model, the preparation phase was defined as "*preparing for an emergency*" and the operations phase as "*responding to an actual emergency*". The four distinct areas of service activity, identified in Chapter Three as being "*planning, liaison, training and operations*" (E.P.S., 2000), were also incorporated into the model building process. In addition, a fifth, a managerial activity was identified; how the service and the factors influencing it were managed. This proposal reflected the consideration and scrutiny of all management processes provided in all four of the existing quality models reviewed earlier in this



chapter. For the purposes of developing the model, the five distinct areas of Emergency Management activity were divided between the two phases. Planning, liaison and training formed the preparation phase of the service since they are undertaken prior to an emergency. Operations was a separate phase of the service sub-divided into immediate recovery and long-term recovery and both are undertaken in response to an actual emergency occurring. The managerial activity overarches both the preparation and operational phases of the service. This concept is shown in visual format in Figure 7.5., and as illustrated is comprehensive in its coverage of the whole Emergency Management provision.

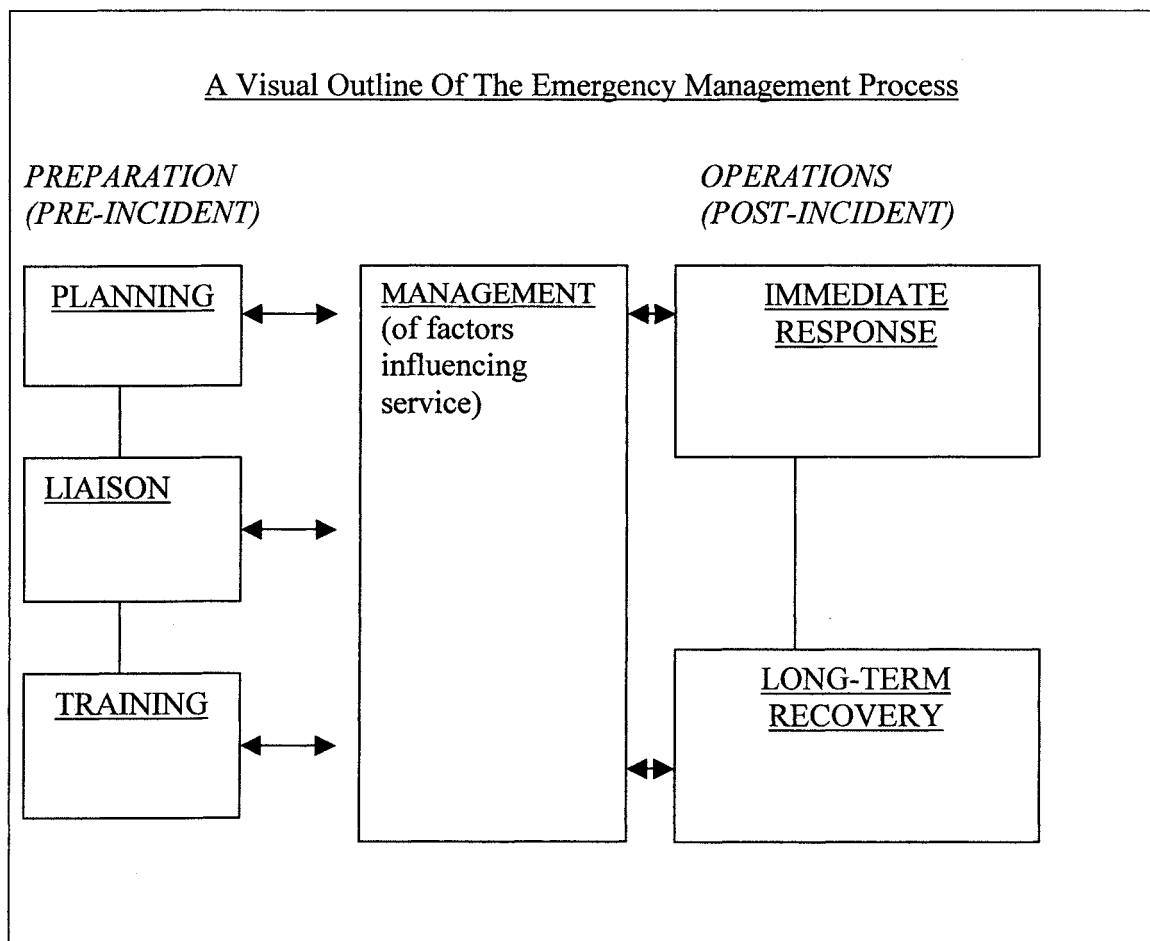


Figure 7.5.: A Visual Outline Of The Emergency Management Process

Whilst the visual outline presented in Figure 7.5. makes the concept easier to understand, it does not provide any actual detail of what is meant by the terms ‘planning’, ‘liaison’, ‘training’, ‘management’, ‘immediate response’ or ‘long-term recovery’. A strength of the Excellence Model was it considered how inputs were used to achieve results, thus any bespoke model to be as effective it must identify ‘activities’ (inputs) and ‘outcomes’ (results) for each area of work.

#### Planning:

In 1997 the Home Office stated *“the main planning stages associated with any emergency are usually assessment, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery”*. In light of the criticism made by Emergency Management stakeholders towards the clarity of this guidance (Cunningham, March 2002), the author applied practitioner experience to this definition in order to identify the full remit of the planning process. Eight activities were identified as making up the planning aspect of the service; ‘project management’, ‘research’, ‘consultation’, ‘draft emergency plan procedures’, ‘identify and allocation resources’, ‘set up 24 hour notification systems’, ‘publish plan’, ‘monitor, amend and maintain plan’.

Project management is an essential part of any business planning activity (Richardson and Richardson, 1992). Producing any Emergency Plan is a complex and time consuming process that requires careful project management in order to ensure pre-determined aims and objectives are achieved, the work is completed within budget and to a desired timescale. For example, when producing a Plan, a timetable should

be compiled that divides the process into smaller components with the resource needs and costs of each component being clearly identifiable as well as key reporting dates.

Research should be a vital component of planning to ensure lessons learnt following emergencies are incorporated into plans making them as robust as possible. An Oil Pollution Emergency Plan, for example, cannot be produced without researching the environmental implications of an oil spill and the latest recommended clean-up techniques for restoring the environment to normality as quickly as possible.

Consultation was also identified as an activity of planning. Indeed, the importance of this activity has been acknowledged by the Home Office who are of the opinion it must involve officers within the local authority as well as external stakeholders (Home Office, October 1999). The response to an emergency will involve many different organisations therefore when producing a Plan consultation must take place with all interested parties to ensure all procedures dovetail so there is no confusion, duplication of effort or unaccounted aspects of the project's work.

All types of Emergency Plans are complex documents to produce and it is therefore, in the author's experience, impractical to publish the first draft plan produced. Plans should be drafted and discussed with all relevant parties before the final agreed version is published. Drafting and consultation will ensure any anomalies are highlighted and rectified prior to Plan publication.

An important element of planning is to identify and allocate resources that can later be used in emergency response. The Home Office (October 1999) defined resources as

*“people, finance and equipment”*. By undertaking this task in the planning activity, time could be saved during actual response to an emergency since resources will have already been pinpointed. In addition, these resources can be used during training prior to any actual emergency response.

Another essential activity was the setting up of 24 hour notification systems (Home Office, October 1999) through identification of 24 hour contact points for all organisations that would need to be made aware of an emergency and expected to play a part in response. Such a notification system would be used once an emergency has occurred and the Emergency Plan needs to be activated.

Once a plan has been drafted and agreed, it should be published and distributed as a controlled document to all relevant parties. For example, the distribution list for an off-site Emergency Plan produced as a legal requirement would include amongst others various members of the major accident site’s management team, the emergency services, the local authorities, health authorities and the Environment Agency.

However, once a plan has been published that is not the end of the planning process because such Plans need to be kept in a state of readiness (Home Office, 1998). For this reason, monitoring, amending and plan maintenance are key activities in planning. All Plans should be reviewed and amended regularly to ensure they remain current and reflect up-to-date working practices. For example, some plans may be amended on a quarterly basis or a six monthly basis with one-off amendments being issues when changes take place that are key to the actual emergency response.

From these activities seven outcomes should be achieved; ‘the production of generic plans’, ‘site-specific plans’, ‘consequence-specific plans’, ‘business continuity plans’, ‘a 24 hour contact directory’, ‘a mitigation of risk factors’ and ultimately ‘an increased level of preparedness’.

Generic plans produced should detail how a local authority will respond to an emergency regardless of its cause or location, as discussed in Chapter Three (E.P.S., 2000).

Site-specific plans produced should detail how a local authority will respond to an emergency at a specific site, as discussed in Chapter Three (E.P.S., 2000).

Consequence-specific plans produced should detail how a local authority will respond to an incident that, regardless of cause or location, has a specific effect, as discussed in Chapter Three (E.P.S., 2000).

A business continuity plan is a plan detailing how a local authority will ensure it continues operating and providing services should an emergency affect them directly (Home Office, October 1999). If a city centre, for example, is flooded a local authority will not only be expected to be involved in response, but could find their own operational buildings have been affected by flood water. In this instance, a Business Continuity Plan would be activated that details the local authority’s services in priority order to ensure they are re-instated so the public continue to receive their key services.

A 24 hour contact directory should contain emergency telephone, fax and mobile numbers, i.e. those which are manned on a 24 hour basis, for all organisations and officers needed to respond to any type of emergency (Home Office, October 1999).

As discussed in the literature review, it is impossible to remove risks totally because new risks and emergencies are being experienced on a regular basis. For this reason, another outcome of effective planning should be to mitigate the level of risk exposure by having procedures robust enough to cope with any eventuality.

The ultimate outcome of the planning process is arguably an increased level of preparedness. In-depth consultation with a wide range of organisations is an essential pre-requisite in providing effective plans (McCarthy, 2002). Consultation potentially results in increased understanding of each others roles and ultimately the desired effect is increased preparedness for an emergency.

Liaison:

When considering the liaison aspect of the service, three activities were identified; 'consulting local community representatives', 'chairing formal planning groups' and 'consulting external stakeholder organisations'.

Consulting local community representatives is considered to be an activity because this should ensure the needs and views of the community are incorporated into the preparation phase of the Emergency Management service (Home Office, October 1999). Community representatives include both Elected Members (one of the

stakeholder groups within the Emergency Management provision) and local residents groups.

Liaison and consultation are key features in the preparation phase of the service. Formal groups should be established and attended by representatives of all relevant parties in emergency response so as to ensure all procedures and arrangements integrate (McCarthy, 2002). In addition, such forums will ensure new initiatives or changes in procedures are understood and incorporated into existing plans. Such groups should be chaired by the local authority in-line with the principles of I.E.M. (Home Office, 1998).

The final activity identified under liaison was the need for consultation with external stakeholder organisations. This activity will ensure the needs and views of appropriate external stakeholder organisations are incorporated into the preparation phase of the service (Home Office, October 1999). External stakeholder organisations include the emergency services, the utilities, the health authorities and the voluntary sector.

From these follow three liaison outcomes; ‘the creation of a formal multi-agency planning framework’, ‘the mitigation of risk factors’ and ‘increased preparedness’.

For liaison to be effective and meaningful, it should involve all relevant agencies and take place in accordance with a pre-agreed structure to ensure communications are cascaded upwards and downwards (McCarthy, 2002). A good example of such a structure was shown earlier in Figure 3.1..

As mentioned earlier, whilst it is impossible to remove risks totally, the outcome of effective liaison should also contribute towards mitigating the level of risk exposure.

Additionally, effective liaison with responding agencies, local community representatives and external stakeholders should, result in increased understanding of each others roles and ultimately increased preparedness prior to an emergency.

#### Training:

Training should comprise of eight activities; ‘create training strategy’, ‘project management’, ‘consultation’, ‘produce training material’, ‘identify participants’, ‘run tests and exercises’, ‘deliver seminars’ and ‘produce literature’.

Once an Emergency Plan has been published, it is vital that as well as keeping it up-to-date, relevant officers, both within and outside of the local authority, are given appropriate training. A training strategy should be devised which incorporates the differing needs of all types of officer (Home Office, October 1999).

Providing Emergency Management training is a demanding and on-going process requiring project managing in order for it to be effective (E.P.S., 2000). For example, there needs to be a cyclical structured approach to training commencing with a comprehensive training needs analysis then focussing upon preparation, delivery and evaluation linking back into the needs analysis (Home Office, October 1999).



Consultation is important because different officers will have, depending upon the role they take in emergency response, differing training needs. Actual training needs can only be determined and assessed via appropriate levels of consultation (Petty, 1998).

The author considered appropriate training materials should be produced to assist in fulfilling the identified training needs of the identified officers.

All potential emergency responders, should be identified for training purposes. The identification of training needs can assist in devising appropriate emergency tests and exercises (Home Office, October 1999).

Running tests and exercises provide the opportunity for potential responders to put Emergency Plans into action, albeit in response to artificial scenarios (National Audit Office, 2002). Such tests and exercises provide valuable information as to the likely effectiveness of a Plan in responding to an emergency and allow weaknesses to be identified and amended accordingly. For example, Exercise Ocean Crystal, a live multi-agency operational exercise, was held in November 2002 to test a Port Authority's Oil Pollution Plan. This exercise entailed a wide number of organisations performing their operational response role. A follow-up debrief ensured strengths and weaknesses contained in the Plan were identified and remedial action put in place (Thompson, 2002).

Delivering seminars is another activity that allows awareness of particular issues to be raised whilst provide training at the same time. For example, when a new Plan has

been published an Emergency Management Officer could choose to deliver a seminar to Elected Members which is pitched at a basic level in order to make them aware of the reason for the plan, how it works and then incorporate a mini-discussion exercise so Member awareness is raised.

Literature should be produced prior to training tests and exercises so participants are fully aware of the aim, objectives and format of such an event. This literature should be distributed to and discussed with participants sufficiently prior to the event so they have time to fully consider the implications. This should ensure the maximum potential is obtained which is important considering that all participants will be giving up their time to participate. Similarly, post-test literature should be produced highlighting the lessons learnt during the test/exercise and their future implications. An exercise to test a local authority's management structure in times of an emergency, for example, may reveal there are insufficient support staff identified to perform administrative duties. This fact would be incorporated into a post-exercise report with a recommendation more support staff are identified and trained appropriately.

The training activities should result in eight outcomes, 'awareness raising seminars', 'table top exercises', 'live exercises', 'planning tests', 'producing information leaflets', 'exercise debrief reports', 'mitigating risk factors' and 'increasing levels of emergency response preparedness' (Home Office, 1998).

The identification of training needs and the production of a training strategy should result in actual training taking place with officers from within and outside of the local authority. Training can take many forms including awareness raising seminars, table

top exercises, live exercises and tests. Awareness raising seminars provide an opportunity to do exactly what they say, i.e. increase a persons understanding of a particular issue, plan or procedure (Home Office, 1998).

Table top exercises provide a way of testing an Emergency Plan using an artificial scenario in a 'desk top' setting without having to actually deploy resources for real. For example, a table top exercise would be an effective way to test the effectiveness of a generic Emergency Plan's management structure in responding to a multi-vehicle pile-up resulting in a chemical release over a nearby housing estate. The Home Office believed such exercises ensure players gained experience of interacting with the other agencies likely to be involved in emergency response and at the same time gained a greater appreciation of each others roles and responsibilities during such eventualities (Home Office, 1998). An additional benefit of this approach is high levels of realism can be achieved if organised effectively.

In contrast, live exercises are the nearest type of exercise to reality as possible. They provide another way of evaluating the effectiveness of an Emergency Plan and of giving officers a 'hands-on' role in emergency response. A live exercise, for example, is a good way to test an Oil Pollution Emergency Plan. While actual oil cannot be spilled as part of an exercise it is possible to deploy the actual equipment that would be used in clean-up response. Indeed, with this type of exercise emergency communications and media arrangements can be tested as well. 'Casualties' can be simulated too, all of which adds to the perceived realism of the event (Home Office, 1998).

Identified training needs must be incorporated into planning tests so they can be as effective as possible.

Another useful training resource are information leaflets. These leaflets can be of a general nature or specific to certain issues (such as flooding). They can be used during training sessions and can be taken away by participants for future reference purposes.

After any type of training event, test or exercise, participants should take part in verbal debriefing so they can express their immediate comments and concerns about the procedures which have been under scrutiny (Home Office, 1998). In addition, participants should be asked to complete a post-evaluation questionnaire, where they express in written form their comments and suggestions for future improvement. All comments should then be collated and a debriefing report compiled which incorporates recommendations as to how emergency procedures and plans can be improved and strengthened. This approach is in-line with advice from the Home Office, that emergency exercises should be recorded and evaluated so in the event of a real emergency situation occurring in the future that results in a formal inquiry such documents can be produced to demonstrate the authority's commitment to Emergency Management (Home Office, 1998).

Effective training should contribute towards mitigating the level of risk exposure by raising awareness and understanding of what Emergency Plans are and how they work thereby ultimately increasing levels of emergency preparedness.

### Immediate Response:

As a result of the literature review and the practitioner-researcher's experience of emergency response, the immediate response aspect of the operations phase of the Emergency Management service has been broken down into sixteen activities. These are shown in Table 7.10.

<u>Operations – Immediate Response Activities:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activating Emergency Plans;</li> <li>• supporting emergency servicees;</li> <li>• setting up a Crisis Management Team;</li> <li>• opening Emergency Centres;</li> <li>• providing regular media briefing;</li> <li>• monitoring financial expenditure;</li> <li>• arranging for VIP visits;</li> <li>• co-ordinating staff recruitment;</li> <li>• providing transport, labour material, plant and materials;</li> <li>• providing short-term accommodation;</li> <li>• providing catering/cleaning services;</li> <li>• opening evacuation reception centres;</li> <li>• adapting buildings for use as temporary mortuaries;</li> <li>• opening friends and relatives reception centres;</li> <li>• providing welfare arrangements; and</li> <li>• providing trauma counselling.</li> </ul>

Table 7.10.: Operations – Immediate Response Activities

The activities listed in Table 7.10. were identified for many reasons. Upon receiving notification of an emergency, the appropriate Emergency Plan would be activated as it contains the agreed procedures that would be implemented when such an incident occurs (McCarthy, 2002).

Under the principles of I.E.M. (Home Office, 1998), it is expected a local authority will support the emergency services appropriately as they respond to an emergency.

Upon activating the appropriate Emergency Plan, the local authority should then establish its pre-agreed management structure for responding to an emergency. An authority's formal day-to-day management and decision making structure is usually inappropriate for responding to an emergency because it is not designed to make rapid decisions in response to a fast-changing situation and could potentially hinder any subsequent response.

Once the local authority Crisis Management Team has been called together, arrangements should then be made to open up the dedicated Emergency Centre from where the Team will lead the authority's response (McCarthy, 2002).

During an emergency, the media will want to be kept informed of events and will need a regular and accurate supply of information. Whilst it is the responsibility of the Police to issue information to the media, the local authority will be expected to provide information about their response to the Police for inclusion in subsequent press releases (Home Office, 1998).

During an emergency response, even if a Chief Executive has delegated powers, a local authority must monitor the financial expenditure incurred as a result of the emergency (Home Office, 1998). Local authorities are permitted under the Section 138 of the 'Local Government Act 1972' to spend whatever is necessary to respond to an emergency. Each year a local authority is assigned a Bellwin threshold<sup>8</sup> calculated on the basis of a proportion of their Standard Spending Assessment. If the level of expenditure incurred in emergency response exceeds the Bellwin threshold, then central government financial assistance can be sought to cover 85% of eligible costs above the threshold ([www.local.detr](http://www.local.detr), 2002). In order to make such a claim, local authorities must keep clear and accurate records of their expenditure (Home Office, 1998). For example, such assistance was provided to Weymouth and Portland Borough Council towards costs incurred following the 'Portland bomb' evacuation on 1 April 1995 ([www.newsrelease-archive](http://www.newsrelease-archive), 2002). However, not all local authorities are successful in obtaining such reimbursement from central government. For example, the Border Telegraph reported in April 2001 that whilst the Scottish Borders Council had submitted an application for Bellwin assistance to cover costs of recent blizzards (estimated to be between £500,000 and £750,000), the authority's "*chances of receiving compensation were slim*". By December 2001, the Peebleshire News then reported the Scottish Executive would, under the Bellwin Scheme, recompense the authority with £291,134. The amount of recompense and the time delay in making the payment was heavily criticised by the then Leader of the Scottish Borders Council.

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<sup>8</sup> The Bellwin Scheme provides emergency financial assistance to local authorities. The scheme was established under Section 155 of the 'Local Government And Housing Act 1989'.

During times of emergency, it is possible that certain V.I.P.s may request to visit the scene of the emergency. For example, senior government Ministers have been highly visible visiting the scenes of recent train crashes. In the event of such a visit, the local authority is required to assist the Police in making arrangements appropriate for dealing with dignitaries and protocols (Home Office, 1998).

Depending upon the nature of the emergency experienced it may be necessary for a local authority to recruit additional staff to help them cope with the immediate response. For this reason, co-ordinating staff recruitment is an immediate response activity.

Similarly, in certain types of emergency a local authority may receive requests from the emergency services to provide transport, labour, plant and materials to assist them with the immediate response (McCarthy, 2002).

Providing accommodation in the short-term for people displaced by an emergency is a key local authority activity in the immediate operational response to any emergency (Home Office, 1998). For example, flooding can result in people being evacuated from their homes and it is the responsibility of the local authority to provide Rest Centres at which evacuees can congregate to shelter, receive refreshments and other basic provisions.

The local authority can also assist the immediate response by providing catering and cleaning services (McCarthy, 2002).



In the event of an emergency resulting in fatalities, it could be necessary to set up a temporary mortuary facility where post mortems can be carried out. In this eventuality, a local authority could be requested to assist in adopting a building for use as a mortuary (Home Office, 1998).

If people have been fatally or seriously injured as a result of an emergency it is appropriate to establish a Friends and Relatives reception centre to provide these parties with a meeting place prior to being given more specific information. The local authority would play a key role in opening and running such a centre. This reflects the Home Office's research that if people believed their friends and relatives have been involved in an emergency more often than not they would wish to visit the emergency scene or a nearby meeting point in order to seek information (Home Office, 1998).

In some emergencies victims may have witnessed mass destruction, fatalities or injuries and as a result there is a strong probability they will suffer from extreme shock. As part of its welfare responsibilities, the local authority should consider providing trauma counselling for victims (McCarthy, 2002). The Home Office perceived the treatment of people affected by an emergency must be given top priority in emergency response.

From these operational immediate response activities, three outcomes were identified; 'mitigation of effects on the community', 'production of short-term incident report and debriefs' as well as 'demonstrating community leadership'.

An effective immediate emergency response can help to ensure the effects faced by the community will be mitigated.

A key outcome from this aspect of the service should be the production of incident reports and debriefs detailing the immediate lessons learnt from the response. This outcome should then be incorporated back into the planning process to ensure procedures are amended and strengthened accordingly (Home Office, 1998).

Ultimately for the response to be effective, local authorities must play a key role by demonstrating clearly they take their community leadership role seriously (Home Office, August 2001).

#### Long-term Recovery:

The author identified seven activities in the operations long-term recovery aspect of the Emergency Management service; 'setting up and administering a Disaster Appeal Fund', 'arranging a memorial service', 'providing long-term accommodation', 'undertaking specialist repair works or demolition', 'providing economic recovery strategies', 'co-ordinating long-term multi-agency response' and 'restoring the environment'.

In high profile emergencies such as the Lockerbie plane crash and the Dunblane school massacre, the public often feel an overwhelming desire to make a financial donation as a token of their feelings (British Red Cross Society, 1999). It is expected

a local authority should play a key role in setting up, administering a Disaster Appeal Fund and taking receipt of donations (McCarthy, 2002).

For emergencies resulting in fatalities and serious injuries, a memorial service may be organised as a mark of respect for the victims as well an opportunity for survivors to come together and grieve (Home Office, 1998). It will be the responsibility of the local authority, in association with the Police and other key organisations to arrange such a memorial. The timing of such a service will vary depending upon circumstances. For example, following the Selby Train Crash a memorial service was held one year to the date of the incident and was held at the scene of the crash ([www.guardian](http://www.guardian), 2002).

Depending upon the emergency, it may be possible some people may lose their homes. In this situation, the local authority will be required to provide those people with long-term accommodation (McCarthy, 2002).

During the long-term recovery phase, local authority focus will switch, if necessary, to surveying damaged buildings, bridges and roads in order to make an assessment of work to be undertaken (McCarthy, 2002). For example, some properties and structures may be salvageable by specialist repair whilst others may be deemed unsafe and have to be demolished.

The consequences of certain emergencies can seriously impact upon the economic status of an area. For example, the recent foot and mouth disease outbreaks resulted in serious economic problems in many rural areas. The local authority is responsible

for taking the lead in co-ordinating economic recovery strategies to alleviate such problems. For example, in Cumbria following the 2001 foot and mouth outbreaks a Foot and Mouth Disease Task Force and Rural Regeneration Team was established which produced a long-term strategy for the recovery and regeneration of rural Cumbria and produced the Rural Action Zone (R.A.Z.) programme. This programme provided a strategy regarded as essential for ensuring rural Cumbria recovered not only from the after effects of foot and mouth disease but also challenged those that will face the area over the next 20 years (Cumbria County Council, 2002).

In the long-term recovery phase of the service, a local authority would be expected to assume the lead co-ordinating role as per the principles of I.E.M. (Home Office, October 1998), to ensure the area and the environment were restored to normality as quickly as possible.

Three outcomes were identified as resulting from the long-term recovery activities; ‘mitigating the effects on the community’, ‘ensuring a gradual return to ‘normality’’ and ‘producing long-term incident reports and debriefs’.

An effective long-term recovery strategy should help to ensure the effects of an emergency faced by the community are mitigated as much as possible (Home Office, October 1999). All activities undertaken in response to an emergency must work towards the long-term goal of returning the area to as near to or better than its status prior to the emergency as possible (Home Office, 1998).

As the recovery phase comes to an end it is important the local authority identifies those actions that worked well during the immediate response and long-term recovery phases of a response as well as those that did not. This activity ensures an authority is able to incorporate its lessons learned back into the planning activity (Home Office, 1998).

#### Management:

In addition to planning, liaison, training and operations, a fifth component of the Emergency Management service was suggested and has been defined as managerial activity. Eight factors were identified that affected the management of the service; 'public expectations', 'risk assessment', 'legislation', 'funding', 'politics', 'own past experience', 'others past experience' and 'availability of Emergency Management expertise'.

The expectations of the public can, in certain instances, influence how the service is managed and in which direction it moves. For example, in geographical areas which are prone to flooding residents may appeal to their local authority to have in place emergency procedures to help in the event of future flooding.

Risk assessments allow risks to be categorised according to the probability of their occurrence and the likely severity of disruption they would cause. For risks identified as having a high probability of occurrence and would result in a high severity of disruption, there is an obvious greater need to ensure they are planned for and a response pre-determined (Home Office, 1998).

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How effectively can a Best Value Review be  
undertaken within a local authority  
Emergency Management service?

Volume 2 of 2

Tracey Jane Ayre

PhD

March 2004

Legislation often dictates the direction of the service, as discussed earlier in Chapter Three. In addition, there are many pieces of legislation and national government initiatives that strongly influence the workings of a local authority and as a result impact indirectly on the Emergency Management service.

The level of service funding, the Civil Defence Grant allocation received and/or the level of local authority contribution, strongly influences the extent of the Emergency Management work undertaken. The issue of funding has already been discussed extensively in Chapters Three and Six. Indeed, financial constraints may perhaps hinder a local authority Emergency Management service from undertaking research into new areas of work resulting in the service not being as effective as possible.

Another influencing factor upon the management of the service is the level of first-hand experience a local authority has in responding to an emergency. It is perhaps possible local authorities with experience of emergency response are more likely to be proactive in the running of their Emergency Management service (Cunningham, March 2002).

In addition, the experiences of other local authority Emergency Management services, particularly those obtained during actual response to an emergency, often influence the way the service is provided. For example, following the Selby Train crash in 2001 many local authorities undertook appropriate survey work assessing similar bridge structures ([www.holdthefrontpage](http://www.holdthefrontpage), 2002).



Ultimately, the level of Emergency Management expertise available to a local authority could influence the direction the service took and how it was managed. For example, a local authority with very little Emergency Management expertise available may not be able to be as proactive in conducting and responding to horizon-scanning activities than compared with a local authority that has a greater level of Emergency Management expertise.

At this point the activities and outcomes identified for each component of the Emergency Management service were incorporated into the visual outline shown earlier in Figure 7.5. in order to facilitate a comprehensive Best Value Review by highlighting all the major components of the provision and the inter-relations between the various parts of the provision. The revised visual outline incorporating the activities and outcomes is shown in Figure 7.6.

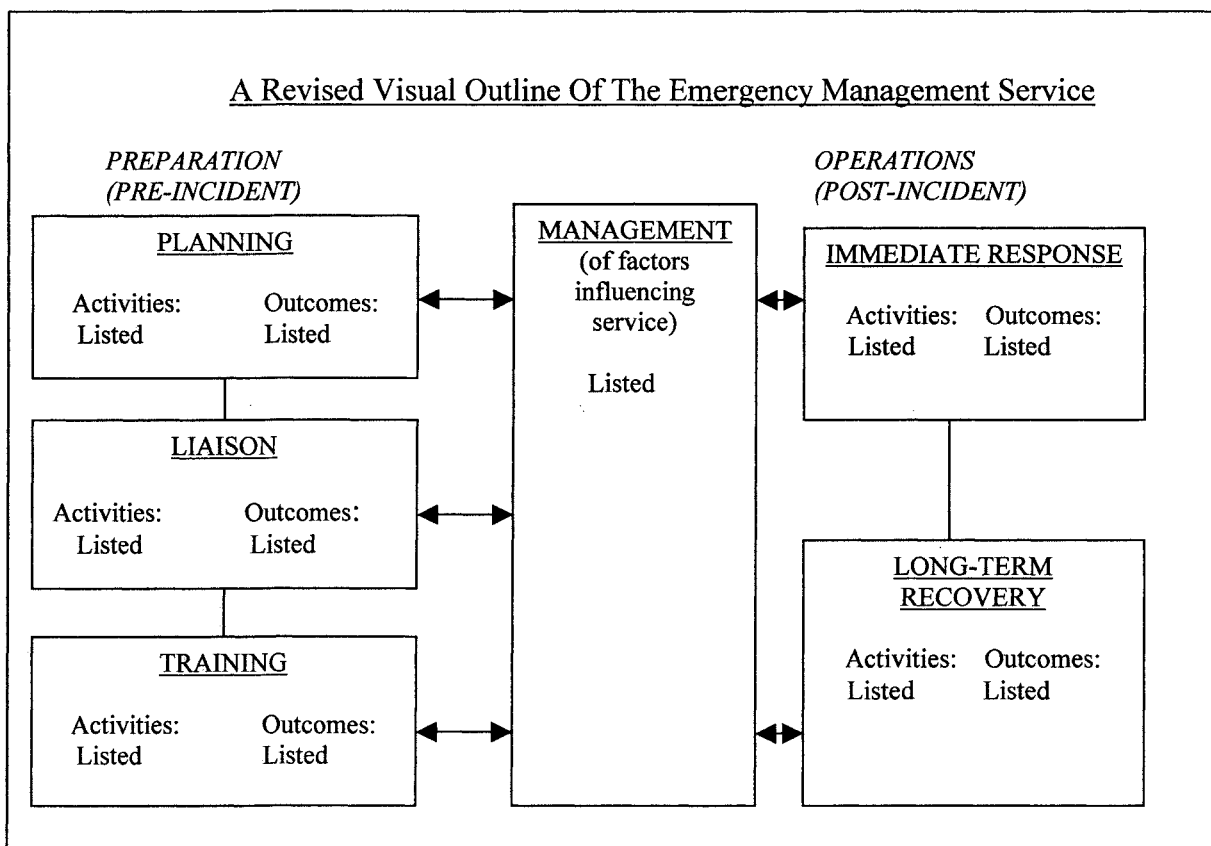


Figure 7.6.: A Revised Visual Outline Of The Emergency Management Service

This visual presentation already goes much further than the written central government description of the local authority role in Emergency Management (Home Office, 1998) as it clearly identifies the individual components of the service (and the activities and outcomes which make up those components) as well as showing the interface between the pre-incident and post-incident situations. The local authority Emergency Management service has never before been presented in this type of visual format. In addition, this top-tier of the prototype incorporated and built upon those issues identified in the P.E.S.T. (Table 4.6.) as influencing how the service is delivered. The P.E.S.T. recognised much of the existing central government Emergency Management guidance has been criticised for its lack of clarity, and in response, the author has built upon this guidance to clearly identify the full remit of the service thereby also striving to overcome the current lack of national definitions for the terms ‘emergency’ and ‘Emergency Management’ (reflected by the lack of specific statutory duty for the service). In addition, it is vital to present the local authority Emergency Management service in such a way so as to overcome central government’s perceived lack of understanding.

#### Middle-Tier: ‘The Best Value Process Applied To Emergency Management’

It was important for the middle-tier of the support model, and the subsequent bottom-tier, to be applicable to all local authorities regardless of those influencing factors identified in the census results. The aim of the middle-tier of the model was to define the broad issues needed to be addressed when undertaking a Best Value Review of the Emergency Management service. This tier would provide a local authority Emergency Management Best Value Review Team with a ‘starting point’ in their

implementation of the Best Value process as well as being a management support tool which they can continually refer to throughout the duration of the Review. As a consequence it is based upon the 'Four Cs', which represent the key elements of a Best Value Review process, as prescribed by central government (Sparke, 1999). It was also immediately recognised this support model must be both flexible so it could dovetail and support various Emergency Management providers who are directed by a variety of corporate approaches within their respective local authorities to Best Value. For example, regardless of the sequence or combination in which local authorities decided to address the 'Four Cs' the middle-tier of the model was developed, and later presented along with guidelines for usage, so that it clearly identified what a Best Value Review team had to consider when applying each of the 'Cs' to all Emergency Management activities without dictating the order in which such issues needed to be undertaken.

The definition of the model's parameters involved identifying the key aspects of both the Emergency Management service and the Best Value process. The key aspects of the Emergency Management service were identified from the top-tier of the model as being 'planning', 'liaison', 'training', 'management', 'operations' (immediate response and long-term recovery). The key aspects of Best Value are detailed in both the 'Local Government Act 1999' and the generic framework presented earlier in Figure 2.2., displaying the need to 'challenge', 'compare', 'consult' and 'compete' (collectively referred to as the 'Four Cs'). It is pertinent at this point to refer to Table 7.11. which details what is expected of the 'Four Cs' in a Best Value Review. As the Emergency Management stakeholder census identified, all respondents were aware of Best Value and the vast majority indicated they clearly understood the principles of

Best Value it was reasonable to present the basic structure for the middle-tier as a mapping of the key components of the Emergency Management service to the ‘Four Cs’ of Best Value in a matrix-like presentation. ‘Continuous improvement’ is often referred to as the ‘Fifth C’ of Best Value (Sparke, 1999) and this issue is discussed in detail in Chapter Eight.

#### Expectations Of The ‘Four Cs’

*“Challenge why the particular service is needed at all, and if so whether it needed to be provided in any particular form;*

*Compare performance with others across a range of relevant indicators, taking into account the views of both service users and potential suppliers;*

*Consult with local taxpayers, service users and the wider business community in the setting of new performance targets;*

*Compete in the sense of demonstrating that the preferred means of delivering service has been – or will be – arrived at through a competitive process”*

(Source: D.E.T.R., 1998)

Table 7.11.: Expectations Of The ‘Four Cs’

All key aspects were then presented as a diagram with the Emergency Management activities running from top left to bottom left and Best Value components running along the top left to the top right, as shown in Figure 7.7.

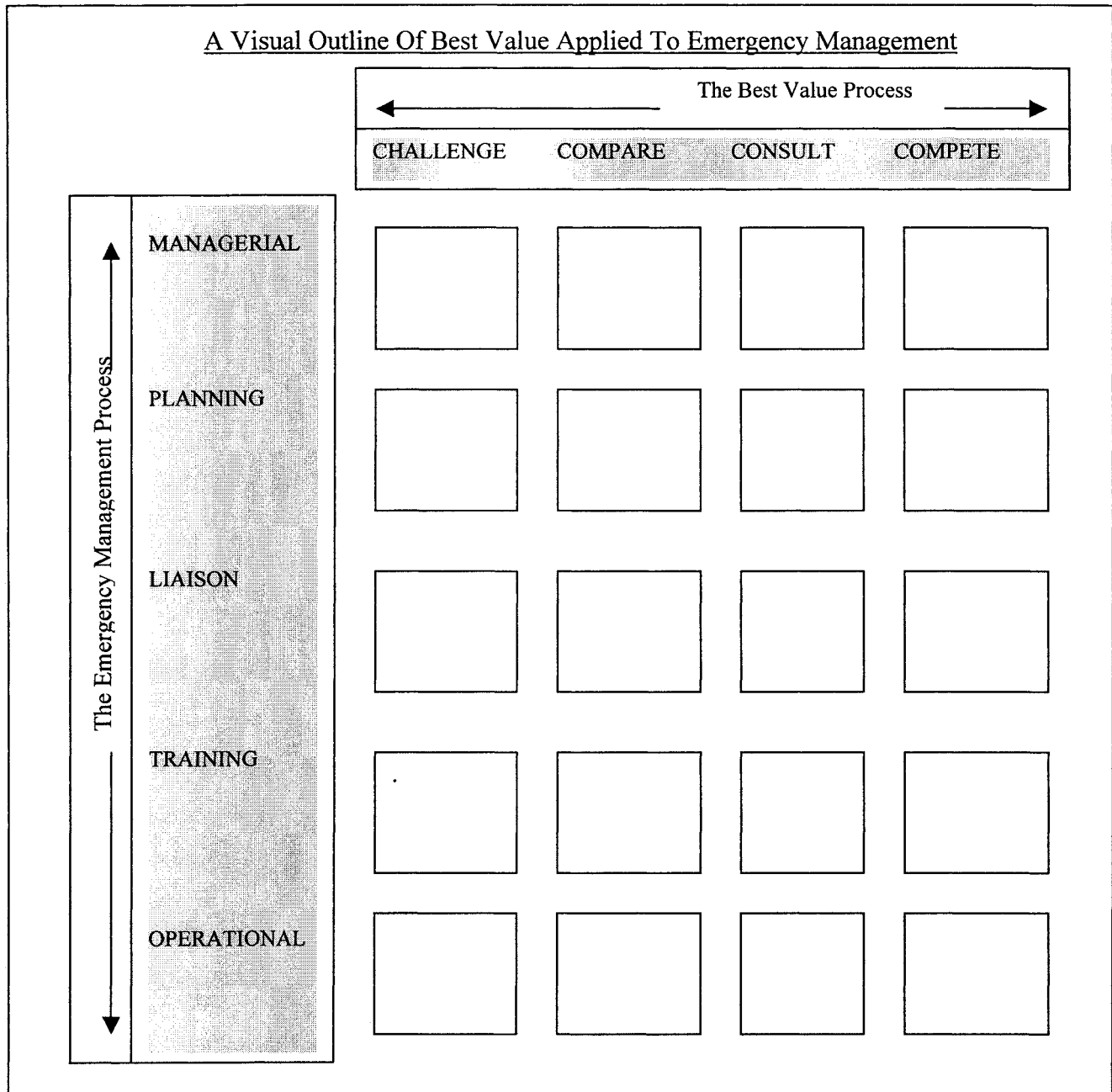


Figure 7.7.: A Visual Outline Of Best Value Applied To Emergency Management

At this stage, it is necessary to apply all the 'Cs' to each component of the Emergency Management service in order to determine the issues that must be addressed during a Best Value Review. As a result of the wide remit of the Emergency Management service, it would be appropriate to keep this tier very generic with the detailed questions to be addressed and answered during a Review being provided in the

relevant sections of bottom-tier of the model. The questions included in this tier, and subsequent bottom-tier, have been developed by combining the findings of the literature review with the results from the Emergency Management stakeholder census and the researcher's operational experience of the service. In addition, as with the previous tier, consideration was given to the findings in the P.E.S.T. (Table 4.6.) and these were incorporated wherever possible into the bottom-tier of the bespoke framework. For example, the P.E.S.T. Analysis clearly acknowledged the declining funding given by central government to local authorities for Emergency Management as well as the need to seek funding from other sources. This issue is one of a number of that was incorporated into the questions of the bottom tier diagrams.

#### Best Value Applied To The Managerial Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

The 'Four Cs' were first applied to the managerial aspect of the Emergency Management service.

When challenging this aspect of the service local authorities must ask themselves why they provide an Emergency Management service and why they provide it in the way they do (Sparke, 1999). Such questioning should identify on what basis the service is run, be it based on historical reasons or on a reactive basis reflecting current or recent risks?

When comparing the managerial aspect of the service local authorities must question how efficiently the service is provided in comparison with similar services provided

by others (E.P.S., October 2000). This questioning will begin to identify how efficiently the service uses its resources (financial and non-financial) in comparison with others as well as an opportunity to identify best practice carried out by others (Sparke, 1999).

Consultation is necessary for local authorities to question how effectively their Emergency Management service is provided. This consultation is necessary in order to obtain the perceptions of a wide range of service stakeholders including the public, the emergency services and the utilities in order to make informed judgements about service efficiency (E.P.S., October 2000).

It is equally important local authorities consider how competitively and economically their service is run when considering resource levels and services provided (Sparke, 1999).

#### Best Value Applied To The Planning Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

Local authorities must challenge their rationale for producing Emergency Plans and procedures that do and, equally as important, do not already exist. Such a challenge should determine whether appropriate plans are produced, reflecting perceived needs.

Local authorities must compare their Emergency Plans and procedures with those produced by others in order to benchmark and share experiences. It is possible

lessons can be learned from other organisations that can ultimately strengthen the existing procedures (E.P.S., October 2000).

Local authorities must consider who to consult with in order to gauge opinion about the current planning aspect of the Emergency Management service. In addition, they must also consider how such consultation will take place because consultation should not occur merely for the sake of it but should result in meaningful and beneficial data being obtained (Sparke, 1999).

The current competitiveness of planning should be determined. For example, is the local authority the most appropriate organisation to deliver the planning activity or could another organisation provide it more competitively?

Best Value Applied To The Liaison Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

Local authorities must challenge the appropriateness of their current liaison arrangements. To do this, they must consider who they currently liaise with, why these parties are consulted and what this process involves. In addition, they should consider who they do not currently liaise with but with whom it may be beneficial to liaise with in the future (E.P.S., October 2000).

Consideration should be given to how liaison arrangements compare with those of other local authorities. This could result in liaison procedures being improved by incorporating the experiences of others. For example, such investigation may reveal



some local authorities may undertake liaison activities with a wider range of external organisations, such as Residents Associations, and thereby create additional benefits in the service (Audit Commission, 1998).

Local authorities need to consider who is consulted with, how and why during the liaison phase of the Emergency Management service. This should determine whether there is a clear rationale for such activities.

The competitive aspect of liaison must be explored to determine if it is undertaken as economically as possible. To what extent, if any, could information technology be utilised during liaison to reduce costs without affecting service quality? For example, could greater use be made of video conferencing to reduce travelling costs or could greater use of e-mail facilities lead to faster dissemination of emergency information?

**Best Value Applied To The Training Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:**

A Best Value Review should challenge the effectiveness of the training currently being delivered (D.E.T.R., 1998). It should include an assessment of why the current trainees are trained and also consider whether they are trained in the most appropriate way possible. It should include an assessment of who is trained, why they are trained, the cost and an assessment of what is involved in such training.

Comparisons should be made with how other local authorities provide their Emergency Management training. This will provide a benchmark of how effective the existing training is as well as possibly identifying new ideas for future exploration.

It is important to consider who is consulted, how and why during the training aspect of the service. In addition, the trainees feedback mechanism should be implemented so an assessment can be made of the success of current training strategies and any deficiencies can be identified.

Equally important is the application of competitive principles to the training aspects of the service. This will ensure an assessment is made of the cost and quality of the training currently provided. As part of this process, other providers should be identified and their services will also be considered to determine if they offer a viable alternative either in whole or part (Sparke, 1999).

**Best Value Applied To The Operations Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:**

Local authorities must fundamentally challenge why they respond to the emergencies they do and similarly identify which emergencies they would not respond to and why. The findings of this challenge should lead to an appraisal of the current preparedness of the authority.

Comparisons of operational procedures should be made with other local authorities. Such a comparison may reveal differences in operational response activities, e.g. it could identify better practices that can then be incorporated into future response

operations. In addition, a comparison may identify local authorities do not always respond to the same types of emergency. For example, during the foot and mouth disease outbreaks in 2001 some local authority Emergency Planning Officers from those areas badly affected were heavily involved operationally, while others were not because it was perceived to be an animal health issue (Cunningham, March 2002).

Consultation should be undertaken to determine the perceptions of people with actual emergency response experience, i.e. those providing the response as well as those at the receiving end of the response. This data should then be analysed in order to make an informed judgement on operational procedures (E.P.S., October 2000).

The competitiveness of operations must also be investigated. It may be possible that other organisations could play a greater role in operational response. For example, during the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreaks, many roadside cleansing and disinfecting points were operated by sub-contractors rather than local authority personnel (Cumbria County Council, 2002).

It soon became apparent that as well as each aspect of the Emergency Management service being inter-related so too are all aspects of Best Value. To reflect this, and the fact local authorities are free to address the 'Cs' in whatever order they choose, links were incorporated into the middle-tier of the model showing each 'C' is not a stand-alone activity but interfaces with each of the other three. This will be addressed in appropriate detail with guidelines to accompany the support model. The revised outline of the matrix which forms the middle-tier of the proposed bespoke model of Best Value Review is shown in Figure 7.8.

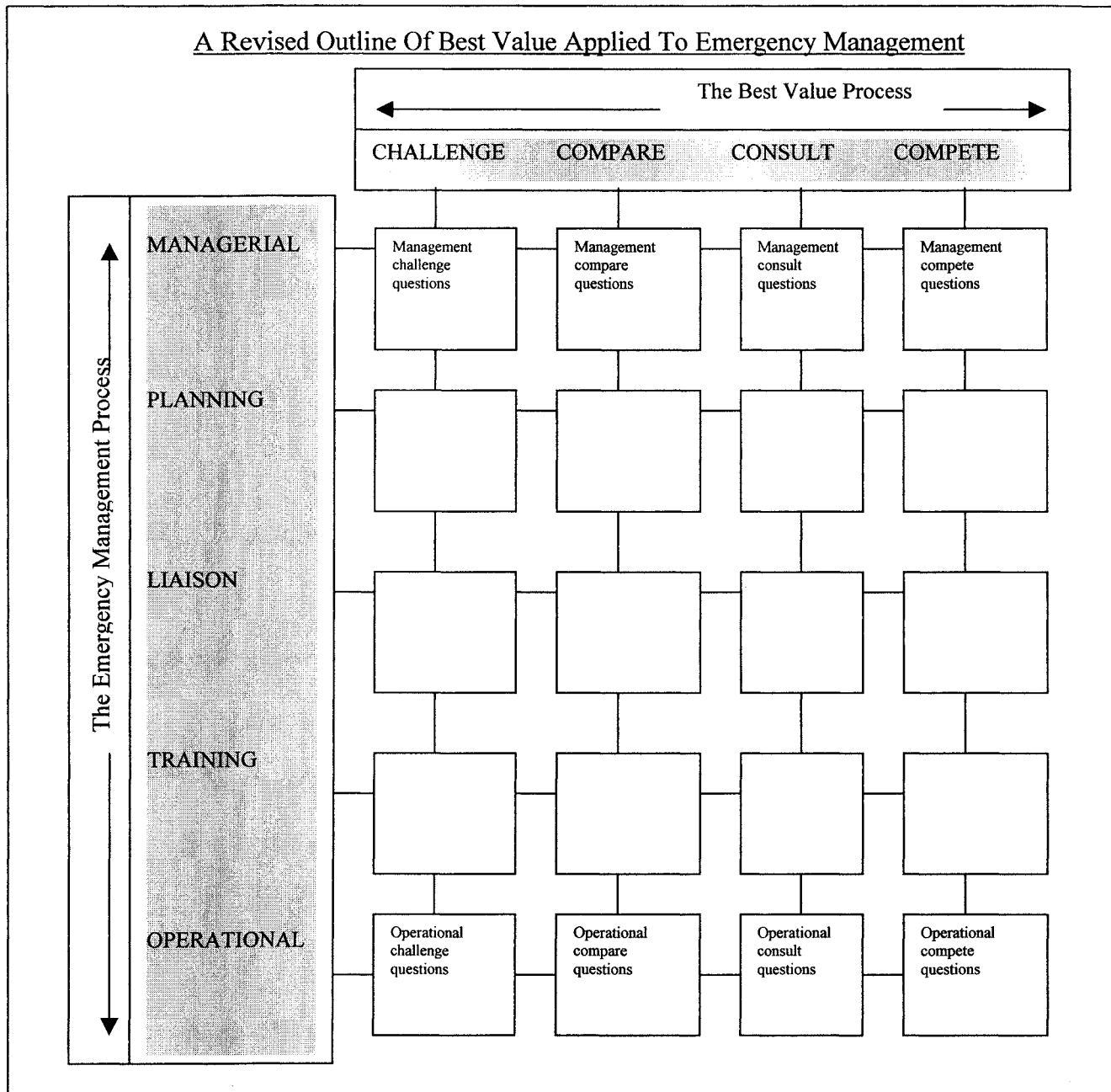


Figure 7.8.: A Revised Outline Of Best Value Applied To Emergency Management

This middle-tier of the proposed model reflects the application of Best Value principles to the entire remit of the Emergency Management service. It is arguably straightforward for a local authority to subject the preparation phase of its Emergency Management service to a Best Value Review but it is much more difficult to subject the operational phase of the service to a Review. The preparation phase (managerial,

planning, liaison and training) takes place on a daily basis and therefore can be carefully overseen. However, operational response is not a daily occurrence; it is an infrequent activity and the activities undertaken will be determined by the type of emergency experienced, its timing and its implications. This tier of the model prompts the Reviewer to apply Best Value principles to all aspects of the Emergency Management service including operational emergency response, and by doing so, will potentially facilitate an effective review of the latter including the less measurable parts of the provision. For example, how did the use of local authority personnel in emergency response compare with the use of external contractors?

With the general middle-tier of the model in place, it was necessary to develop the bottom-tier which would contain the detailed questions to tackle during a Review.

Bottom Tier: 'Specific Issues In Applying Best Value To Emergency Management'

The purpose of this tier is to expand upon the generic questions asked in the previous tier. This tier comprises five detailed explanatory diagrams, one for each aspect of the Emergency Management service, i.e. managerial, planning, liaison, training and operational. All of the questions contained in each diagram represents the substantive content of the Review framework and have been devised to build upon the identified strengths, and overcome limitations, of those existing quality tools discussed earlier.

The diagrams which represent the bottom tier of the proposed Best Value Review support model must also account for the positive and negative perceptions of the Best Value process from those significant and non-statistically significant associations identified during this investigation (Tables 6.10. and 6.11.). Potentially, the

determinants of Best Value implementation, funding, legislation, service monitoring, culture and public awareness could have been used to define the matrix structure which underpins the Best Value support model. However, it was perhaps more appropriate the format of these diagrams was presented in terms of the legally defined requirements of Best Value so as to ensure the model can assist users in achieving what is expected of them on a day to day basis in order to implement the process. For this reason, the structure of the model is defined by the 'Four Cs' to reflect what central government requests stakeholders to achieve in reviewing a service, and report upon a relevant detailed narrative form on the basis of these Best Value drivers as prescribed by central government ('Local Government Act 1999').

The majority of the findings from both the literature review and census regarding service provision do not explicitly map onto the determinants of Best Value as defined by the 'Four Cs'. Instead, many of the literature review and census findings impact upon several aspects of Best Value and for this reason are implicitly embedded into several questions in the bottom tier diagrams. For example, the significance of Emergency Management funding upon service delivery is clearly shown in Table 6.10. However, funding is an issue that needs to be considered by a Review team in the 'challenge', 'compare' and 'compete' requirements of Best Value and for this reason, several questions are asked that contain implicit reference to service funding rather than any explicit financial questions. In contrast, the census identified a series of issues that concerned public understanding and involvement in the Emergency Management service. These issues in the main related directly to the 'consult' requirements of Best Value and therefore were more easy to map into the bottom tier.

The specific questions contained in each diagram have been developed in order to explore the five enablers presented in the Excellence Model (leadership, people, policy and strategy, partnership and resources, processes). The issues of delivering a service in-line with user needs (the philosophy that underpins the Charter Mark) have also been incorporated into the explanatory diagrams. This was done by carefully considering the ten Charter Mark criteria presented earlier in Table 7.2. In the absence of national Emergency Management performance indicators, guidance is given as to how each aspect of the service could be compared and ensure resources are used effectively (fulfilling Criterion One and Seven). The ‘consult’ aspect of each diagram incorporates the requirement to seek the views of service users and take them into consideration when delivering the service in the future (fulfilling Criterion Two, Three, Five and Ten of Charter Mark). Charter Mark criteria have also been incorporated into the ‘compete’ and ‘challenge’ parts of each diagram to ensure all aspects of the Emergency Management service are fully explored in order to determine if they are as economic, efficient and effective as possible and put in place appropriate improvement action (fulfilling Criterion Four, Six and Nine). The principle of Criterion Eight (to continually seek to innovate and improve services), has been implicitly incorporated into each of the ‘Cs’ contained in all explanatory diagrams. This is to ensure Best Value Review Teams determine the most effective way in which to deliver the Emergency Management service in the future. The ‘nurturing’ philosophy of I.I.P. has been incorporated into the Emergency Management training aspect diagram to ensure emphasis is placed upon developing local authority staff in order for them to fulfil their emergency duties. This has been achieved by developing questions to gauge training in terms of the key principles of I.I.P. as shown in Table 7.1. Of equal importance was the need to consider how the

Best Value support model could incorporate the positive themes of ISO9000, these being improving processes, maximising the efficient use of resources and ensuring consistency of service.

A diagram has been devised for each aspect of the Emergency Management service. Each diagram includes questions that require process and resource usage to be researched and then options for improvement to be identified if appropriate. If all local authorities use this support model in its entirety, it will not only assist in potentially ensuring a comprehensive and robust Best Value Review is undertaken, but will also help to work towards a consistent Review process throughout the U.K.. This approach would mean that as Emergency Management Best Value Reviews were undertaken throughout the U.K., a valuable wealth of comparative data could be collected as a bi-product of its application, upon which a national assessment could be made as to how processes could be improved, resource use could be optimised and service consistency ensured across the U.K.. After investigating and answering all questions in the diagrams, a local authority will be able to identify service strengths and areas for improvement and as such, providing its Emergency Management service with a health check. Ultimately, this tier has been developed by building upon identified strengths of all existing quality management models and incorporating these into a single format specifically designed to ensure Emergency Management Best Value Review teams comply with government legislation ('Local Government Act 1999'). By doing this, Best Value Review teams using the support model would have to consider in-depth the issues of leadership, organisation and culture, service design, service delivery and value, namely those issues identified earlier in this chapter by Voss (1997) as being central to organisations achieving superior performance. In



addition to building upon the identified strengths of existing quality management models within this tier (as shown in Table 7.12.), those areas of Best Value identified by Warwick and Cardiff Universities in Chapter Two as being particularly problematic for local authorities to implement, i.e. challenge and compete, have potentially been addressed within the proposed framework.

<u>Strengths From Existing Quality Management Models Incorporated Into The Bottom Tier Of The Support Model</u>	
<u>Existing Model:</u>	<u>Strengths From Existing Model Incorporated Into Bottom Tier Of Prototype:</u>
ISO9000	‘Compare’ and ‘Challenge’ requirements.
Charter Mark	‘Compare’, ‘Compete’ and ‘Consult’ requirements.
I.I.P.	‘Compete’ and ‘Consult’ requirements.
Excellence Model	‘Compare’, ‘Compete’ and ‘Consult’ requirements.

Table 7.12.: Strengths From Existing Quality Management Models Incorporated Into The Bottom Tier Of The Support Model

The extent to which the model supports the perceived benefits of Best Value will be considered at the end of this chapter whilst the consideration of negative aspects of the processes and significant differences in perception based on funding, legislation, service monitoring, culture and public understanding will be described in Chapter Eight.

The questions which form the substantive content of the bottom tier of the model have been developed in such a way as to uphold the strengths of the existing quality frameworks in relation to full and effective implementation of the ‘Four Cs’ whilst

addressing some of the key limitations in this area. The extent to which the proposed bespoke framework addresses the positive and negative perceptions of the Emergency Management stakeholders together with the impact of certain drivers of perception (i.e. funding, legislation, service monitoring, organisational culture and public awareness) will be considered towards the end of the chapter.

The Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To The Managerial Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

The middle-tier of the model states in order to challenge the managerial process of the Emergency Management service a local authority should ‘ask questions in relation to why and how they provide an Emergency Management service’. When considering this generic guidance, six specific questions were identified that local authorities must address during a Best Value Review:

- What is the purpose of the Emergency Management service?
- Why is the Emergency Management service provided?
- How is the Emergency Management service provided?
- Why is the Emergency Management service provided in the way that it is?
- Is the Emergency Management service viewed as a corporate or a departmental service?
- Who has overall responsibility for delivering the Emergency Management service?

The author considers these six questions build upon the principles of ISO9000 by challenging the processes underpinning the managerial aspect of the service. In

addition, the author believes these questions build upon the earlier identified limitation of the Excellence Model, i.e. these questions not only require a local authority to challenge ‘how’ an Emergency Service is provided but also ‘why’ such a service is provided.

In order to compare the managerial aspect of the service a local authority should ‘ask questions in relation to how efficiently the Emergency Management service is provided compared to other geographical areas’. From this general guidance, five detailed questions were identified for the bottom-tier of the model as follows:

- Which organisations should a local authority compare with?
- What aspects of the Emergency Management service should be compared?
- How does the cost of the Emergency Management service compare with that of other local authorities?
- How much do the planning, liaison and training activities of the Emergency Management service compare with those of other local authorities?
- How does the local authority’s range of Emergency Plans compare with those of other local authorities in terms of number and type?

Many Emergency Management stakeholders expressed the opinion that national service performance indicators were necessary in order to improve the service. The questions devised for this component of the model would provide Reviewers with appropriate pointers as to how the managerial aspect of the service could be compared. Additionally, whilst some of the existing quality models discussed earlier recognise organisations can compare their services with those of others (ISO9000, Charter Mark and Excellence Model), the questions contained in this support model

would assist local authorities in overcoming their perceived uncertainty as to how to go about comparing their Emergency Management service. The questions asked encourage local authorities to carefully consider why and with whom they are comparing themselves, i.e. to ensure there is a logical rationale behind comparison exercises. The questions asked in other bottom-tier diagrams then provided local authorities with the questions needed in order to actually compare all aspects of their Emergency Management service.

The middle-tier recommends local authorities ‘ask questions in relation to how effective the service is perceived to be provided by stakeholders’ (Sparke, 1999).

From this, the research identified two specific questions:

- Does the local authority consult with external stakeholders about what the entire package of the Emergency Management service is?
- Does the local authority consult with the public about what the entire package of the Emergency Management service is?

Whilst liaison forms a key part of the day-to-day workings of the Emergency Management service, this does usually not involve the public (as identified during the census) nor does it entail seeking the views of partner organisations regarding the service they receive. These two questions have been developed by building upon the strengths of the Charter Mark, namely striving to provide services to meet user needs by making them consult when they have perhaps not done so in the past.

Local authorities must also consider competition by ‘asking questions in relation to how economically the Emergency Management service is provided’. The bottom-tier supplements this advice with three specific questions:

- Does the local authority use external ‘consultants’ when deciding how best to deliver the Emergency Management service?
- What methods of service delivery have been considered?
- Are there any external agencies that are able to deliver all or part of the Emergency Management service?

All ‘competitiveness’ questions have been developed by considering the information contained in Chapter Two (in particular Table 2.9.) alongside the perceived strengths of three of the key existing quality models in this area, ISO9000 (to ensure existing processes and systems are as effective as possible), I.I.P. (to ensure personnel are of the highest calibre in order to perform as effectively as possible) and the Excellence Model (to identify whether systems are in place and to measure the results achieved). The author believes a local authority considering the three questions above will be in a position to assess the current competitiveness of their service.

The Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To The Planning Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

A local authority must challenge the planning process of its Emergency Management service by ‘asking questions in relation to the reasoning behind the ways their plans are produced’. From this recommendation the research identified eight specific questions to ensure Best Value requirements are met:

- Does the local authority have a defined planning process?
- Why does the local authority produce the plans that it has?
- What factors influence the type of plans written?
- What is the perception of an Emergency Plan?
- What type of Emergency Plans are produced?
- Do Emergency Plans cover all the risks within the local authority's area?
- Are quality standards applied to Emergency Plans?
- Are 24 hour notification systems adequate?

As with the previous diagram's 'challenge', the eight questions listed above were first devised by considering the best practices of existing quality management models reviewed earlier in this chapter. The best practice elements of ISO9000 were incorporated into this diagram to ensure the processes underpinning the planning activities were fully challenged, e.g. hence the question 'Does the local authority have a defined planning process?'. In contrast, to reflect the perceived strength of the Charter Mark as being the consideration of stakeholder needs, several questions were devised to assess whether such stakeholder needs were amongst the factors influencing Emergency Management planning activities, e.g. 'What factors influence the type of plans written?'. Similarly, a key strength of the Excellence Model was the identification of current processes in place and the extent to which they produce high standard results and this was built into this diagram by asking questions such as 'Does the local authority have a defined planning process?' and 'What is the perception of an Emergency Plan?' from which Best Value Review teams would be able to make an assessment of the effectiveness of current processes in conjunction with the findings from all other diagrams.

The middle-tier model goes on to address the consultation aspect of the Review by suggesting local authorities ‘ask questions in relation to how their Emergency Plans and arrangements compare with those of other organisations’. From this, seven specific questions were developed:

- How do Emergency Plans compare with those of other local authorities?
- How do Emergency Plans compare with those of other responding agencies?
- How do Emergency Management planning processes compare with those of other local authorities?
- How do Emergency Management planning processes compare with those of other responding agencies?
- How do 24 hour notification systems compare with those of other local authorities?
- How do 24 hour notification systems compare with those of other responding agencies?
- How do arrangements for consulting with the public during the planning process compare with those of other local authorities?

As with the earlier described comparison aspect of the managerial activity of the service, implicit within the model development process was a desire to build upon the strengths of ISO9000, Charter Mark and the Excellence Model by assisting Best Value Review teams in identifying the most appropriate organisations with whom to compare. These seven questions should assist local authorities in the absence of national indicators, while at the same time ensuring Emergency Management Best

Value Review teams could provide a clear rationale to Best Value Inspectors as to why comparisons were made with the specific organisations considered.

Local authorities need to ‘ask questions in relation to who is consulted, how and why during the planning phase’. When this generic advice was applied, it resulted in four specific questions as follows:

- How does the local authority decide who to consult?
- Which partner organisations does the local authority consult with during planning?
- How are these organisations consulted during planning?
- How does the local authority consult with the public during planning?

The generic principles of Best Value have been applied to the Emergency Management service, as well as considering the consultation activities involved in achieving Charter Mark and I.I.P. accreditation with Charter Mark focussing primarily on consultation with service users and I.I.P. principally focussing on consultation with personnel delivering the service, in order to ensure a Review team rigorously scrutinises its current planning consultation processes.

Competitive principles were then applied by the author to the planning process of the service. The middle-tier of the model advised local authorities to ‘ask questions in relation to the competitiveness of the service’s planning process’. This equates to the following two specific questions being included in the bottom tier of the model:

- Who else could write Emergency Plans on behalf of the local authority?



- Who else could provide 24 hour notification systems on behalf of the local authority?

The rationale for these questions is to ensure a Best Value Review team fully considers how other organisations could be involved in the Emergency Management service (Sparke, 1999). Whilst existing quality management models (Charter Mark, I.I.P. and Excellence Model) assist organisations in determining their level of competitiveness so any remedial action can take place (Charter Mark and I.I.P. only), it is, however, a requirement of Best Value that local authorities must explore the use of external organisations being involved in future service delivery. For this reason, questions were devised to ensure the services provided by other organisations are carefully considered by Emergency Management Best Value Review teams.

The Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To The Liaison Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

Local authorities need to challenge their liaison processes by ‘asking questions in relation to who a local authority liaises with, how and why’. When considering this, the research suggested four specific questions as follows:

- Who are the service’s internal stakeholders?
- Who are the service’s external stakeholders?
- How does a local authority consult with its stakeholders during the liaison process?
- How does the local authority consult with the public during the liaison process of the Emergency Management service?

These questions build upon the key strengths of Charter Mark and I.I.P. through the identification of service users and personnel involved in service delivery, in order to allow Best Value Review teams to challenge how liaison with these stakeholders occurs.

The previous tier of the model advised local authorities to ‘ask questions in relation to how their liaison arrangements compare with those of other organisations’. This has resulted in two specific questions for the bottom-tier:

- How does a local authority’s formal liaison arrangements with partner organisations compare with those of other local authorities?
- How does a local authority’s formal liaison arrangements with partner organisations compare with those of other responding agencies?

In the absence of national indicators, and to reflect the earlier identified support of Emergency Management stakeholders for national service monitoring, questions were devised to encourage Review teams to seek comparison data that could hopefully reveal examples of best practice. These questions have been developed by referencing the earlier identified strengths of ISO9000, Charter Mark and the Excellence Model, namely ‘compare’, ‘challenge’, ‘compete’ and ‘consult’.

The research also gave consideration to ‘asking questions in relation to who is consulted, how and why during the liaison process’. As a result three specific questions were developed:

- Are formal liaison arrangements in place for all partner organisations?

- Is there a formal multi-agency liaison framework in existence?
- How often does the local authority liaise with its partner organisations?

The author considers these questions will assist an Emergency Management Best Value Review team in determining the effectiveness of current liaison arrangements.

The author built upon the Excellence Model's premise that in order to be able to make such an assessment, then liaison activities should first be identified and then their effectiveness diagnosed.

The competitiveness of current liaison processes must also be investigated. To assist this the following specific question has been incorporated into the bottom-tier:

- Are there any external agencies that can provide the liaison forum(s)?

This should assist a Review Team in identifying external agencies that could perform the role currently undertaken by the local authority (Sparke, 1999).

The Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To The Training Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

To challenge the Emergency Management service's training process the middle-tier of the model recommended Review Teams 'ask questions in relation to who is trained, how and why'. To do this seven specific questions as follows were developed based upon the recognised and accepted principles of I.I.P.:

- Do all staff named in Emergency Plans receive formal training?
- Are quality standards applied to Emergency Management training processes?

- How often does Emergency Management training take place?
- What is the format of Emergency Management training?
- Are lessons learnt from Emergency Management training incorporated back into the planning process?
- Do personnel (both local authority and non-local authority) not named in Emergency Plans receive training?
- Is there a formal Emergency Management training strategy developed within the local authority?

The four principles of I.I.P. relate to commitment, planning, action and evaluation.

The principle of commitment underpins the question ‘Do all staff named in Emergency Plans receive formal training?’ as the response will indicate to a Best Value Review team how dedicated a local authority is to its Emergency Management training activities. By contrast, the question ‘Are quality standards applied to Emergency Management training processes?’ was built upon the evaluation principle of I.I.P., i.e. to ensure Best Value Review teams considered how the effectiveness of training activities was gauged. Equally important was the need to develop a series of questions that required Emergency Management Best Value Review teams to consider the planning principle of I.I.P. in relation to training activities hence questions such as ‘How often does Emergency Management training take place?’ and ‘What is the format of Emergency Management training?’. The responses to these questions would enable a Review Team to challenge the planning assumptions behind Emergency Management training activities. Finally, questions were also devised to ensure Review teams could assess the effectiveness of training activities delivered such as ‘Are lessons learnt from Emergency Management training incorporated back

into the planning process?’. The findings obtained to these questions will assist a Review team in assessing the effectiveness of its current training.

Local authorities were advised in the middle-tier of the model to ‘ask questions in relation to how their training arrangements compare with those of other organisations’. This can be achieved by asking two specific questions in the bottom-tier of the model:

- How does the local authority Emergency Management strategy compare with those of other local authorities?
- How does the local authority Emergency Management training strategy compare with those of other responding agencies?

These questions were developed as a result of building upon the previously identified strengths of the compare requirements of ISO9000 and Charter Mark by seeking to improve processes and systems by comparing with those provided by others.

The consultation requirement of the Best Value Review can be tackled by local authorities ‘asking questions in relation to who is consulted, how and why during the training phase’. From this, three specific questions were developed for inclusion in the bottom-tier of the model:

- Are Emergency Management training strategies agreed between the local authority and the service provider?
- Are Emergency Management training activities assessed for effectiveness and if so, how?

- Do personnel named in Emergency Plans have their training needs discussed with them?

The principle of the Charter Mark (delivering a service end-users want), was used as the basis to develop these three questions. By asking and answering these questions the author considered an Emergency Management Best Value Review team would be able to judge whether their training activities were meeting the needs of stakeholders.

The competitiveness of Emergency Management training should be assessed and this can be achieved by getting answers to the following questions:

- Are there any external agencies that can deliver the overall Emergency Management training strategy?
- Are there any external agencies that can deliver part of the Emergency Management training strategy?

These questions have been devised by building upon the requirements of Charter Mark and I.I.P. to ensure services are as competitive as possible as they should guide a Best Value Review team to identify external organisations that could be involved in future improved service training (Sparke, 1999).

## The Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To Operations Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

The middle-tier advises Best Value Review teams to ‘ask questions in relation to why and how it (the local authority) responds to emergencies’. Five specific questions were developed as part of this challenge:

- Is the term ‘emergency’ defined within the local authority?
- What type of emergencies does the local authority become involved in?
- How does the local authority manage emergencies?
- What feedback does the local authority get from the community affected by the emergency?
- Are the lessons learnt from responding to an emergency incorporated back into the planning process?

These questions stem from the ‘challenge’ requirements of ISO9000, Charter Mark and I.I.P., to ensure all operations processes are investigated and discussed.

Comparing operational response activities was important so as to reflect the advice given in the previous tier of the model, namely to ‘ask questions in relation to how the local authority’s operational arrangements compare with those of other organisations’, and this can be achieved by obtaining and assessing the response to the following two questions:

- How does the speed of the local authority’s response to an emergency compare with other local authorities?

- How does the local authority's arrangements for the public being able to access emergency aid compare with those of other local authorities?

These questions have been developed in order to identify what other organisations do during emergency response and compare their actions with those of the local authority Emergency Management service. The foundations for these questions came from the earlier identified strengths of ISO9000, Charter Mark and the Excellence Model since all of these models require users to seek comparative information upon which an assessment can be made as to how effective current processes and systems are and how they can subsequently be improved.

Consultation must also be applied to the operational phase of the service. Review teams had been advised in the earlier tier to 'ask questions in relation to who is consulted, how and why during the operational phase'. This has resulted in developing five specific questions to ensure such consultation takes place:

- What mechanisms are in place to consult with partner organisations during the response to an emergency?
- Are consultation mechanisms with partner organisations assessed for effectiveness and if so, how?
- What mechanisms are in place for the views and needs of those affected by the emergency in order to give them consideration during the emergency response?
- Are consultation mechanisms for the public assessed for effectiveness and if so, how?



- What mechanisms are in place to record the experiences of those involved in the emergency?

These ‘consult’ questions reflect the earlier identified strengths of the Charter Mark, I.I.P. and the Excellence Model through identifying the need to consult with service users and stakeholders in order to determine how effective the service is and how it can improve in the future, thereby ensuring the issue of public awareness (perceived by Emergency Management stakeholders as important) is fully investigated.

The middle-tier of the model advised local authorities to ‘ask questions in relation to the competitiveness of their Emergency Management service in the operational phase’. This can be done by asking two questions:

- Are there any external agencies that can deliver the overall response on behalf of the local authority?
- Are there any external agencies that can deliver part of the response on behalf of the local authority?

As with previous explanatory diagram ‘compete’ questions, the principles of Charter Mark, I.I.P. and the Excellence Model were incorporated to ensure any external organisation identified as having a potential operations role would in fact lead to an improvement in existing service delivery. The findings to these questions may result in the identification of other organisations that could have the potential to provide some or all of the Emergency Management service. From this point, a Review Team can then assess how the most effective operational response can be provided. Many local authorities, particularly those with little emergency response experience, may

find it difficult to answer the questions relating to the operational response aspect of the service. However, for a local authority to prove it has undertaken a comprehensive Best Value Review, it must apply the 'Four Cs' to its entire service, including operational response activities.

Once the specific bottom-tier questions had been devised by the author, work began to consider in what format they should be displayed. All local authorities have to address the 'Four Cs'. They have, however, the freedom to determine how and in what order. For this reason, the bottom-tier of the model (like the previous tier) needed to be flexible to fit all local authority Best Value approaches. In order to do this, a cyclical format was chosen as shown in Figure 7.9. This format shows all 'Cs' interconnect, they are not stand-alone tasks and they can be addressed in any order depending upon the local authority's preferences and this will be stressed in any guidelines which will support the deployment of this framework within an Emergency Management environment. The output from an Emergency Management Best Value Review team using this model will be a series of detailed narratives for each of the questions contained in all explanatory diagrams. These outputs can then be presented within the individual local authority's in-house agreed reporting format by Best Value Review teams to Chief Officers and Elected Members along with recommendations for future service delivery. These recommendations will be made by Best Value Review teams analysing the findings obtained as a result of using the support model.

If an Emergency Management Best Value Review team investigates all of the issues and questions raised in the support model then local authorities can identify best practice and areas for organisational improvement and incorporate this into their

service in an attempt to achieve superior performance, thereby reflecting the earlier advice of Voss (1997) who perceived that all elements of best practice (defined in terms of leadership, organisation and culture, service design, service delivery and service value) were linked together and should be reviewed together on an on-going basis and were ultimately linked to organisational performance.

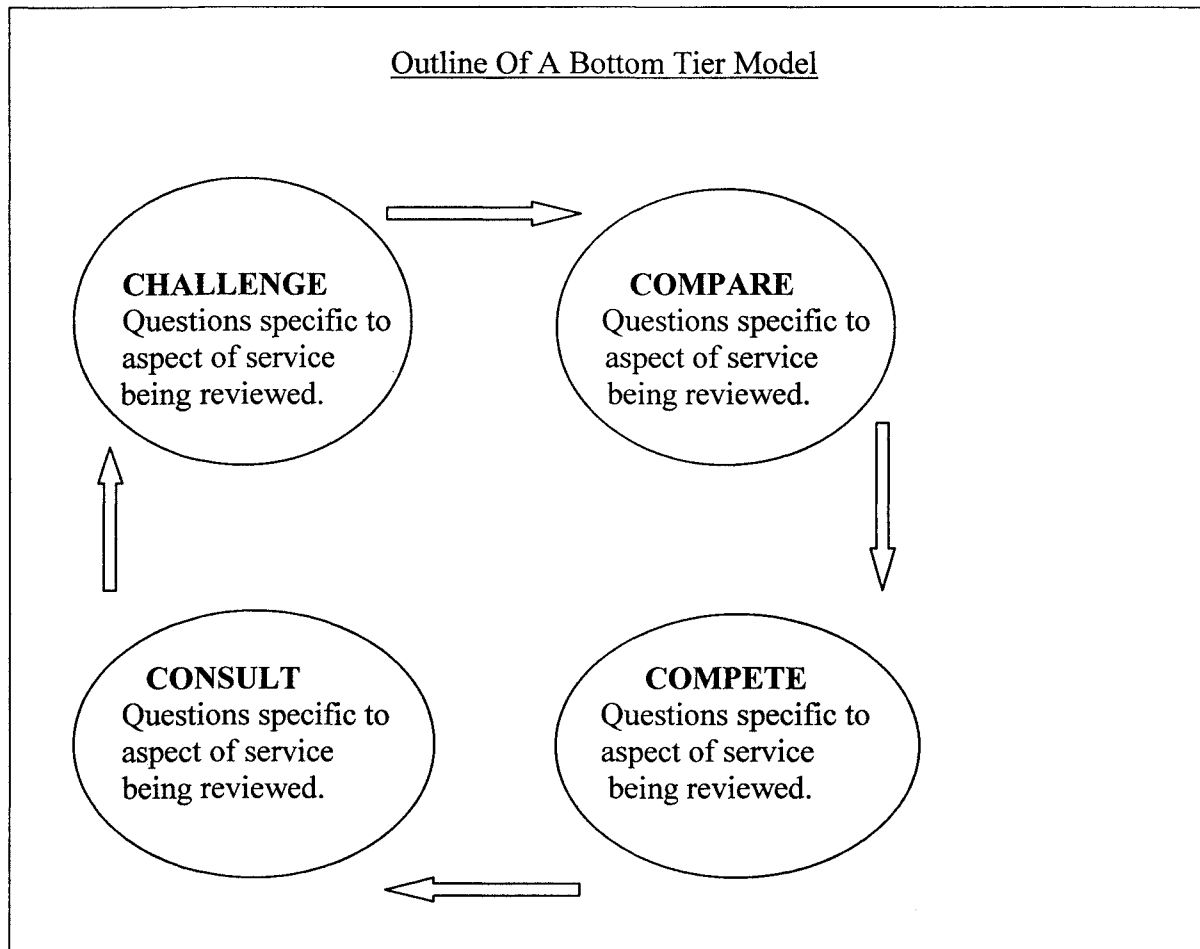


Figure 7.9.: Outline Of A Bottom Tier Model

### How Does The Model Support The Positive Aspects Of Best Value Amongst Emergency Management Stakeholders?

The Best Value Review support model developed built upon existing written guidance provided by central sources (Home Office, 1998, PriceWaterhouseCoopers,

December 2000) and the E.P.S.'s (October 2000) introductory Best Value publication. For this reason, the proposed model has provided an Emergency Management Review team with a greater level of detail than any of these documents. This has been achieved by presenting the Review team with a detailed description of the full scope of the local authority Emergency Management service as well as the issues to be considered to ensure a robust Best Value Review has been implemented. Analysis of the census data suggested many Emergency Management stakeholders would benefit from having a dedicated model they could use when undergoing their Best Value Review. The author believed this model potentially fills this existing void.

The findings in Chapter Six indicated Emergency Management stakeholders perceived five benefits of applying Best Value to Emergency Management, namely 'improving the quality of the service', 'developing partnerships', 'providing a service that responds to public needs', 'the opportunity for continuous improvement' and 'raising the professionalism of the service'. These desired benefits were considered carefully at all stages in the modelling development in order to ensure they were all fully integrated.

To ensure a Best Value Review results in service quality being improved, it is important the Review Team have a full understanding of the remit of the actual service. For this reason, the top-tier of the model clearly portrays the full scope of the service in both the pre and post-incident phases.

In order a Review Team considers the possibility of providing the service through a partnership approach, appropriate questions have been incorporated into the compete

and consult circles of each diagram of the bottom-tier. For example, in the complete circle of the ‘Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To The Training Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service’ the question “Are there any external agencies that can deliver part of the Emergency Management training strategy?” is asked. This question will ensure other providers are identified and that a Review Team then considers how such provider services could be utilised.

Emergency Management stakeholders hoped Best Value would ensure a service was provided which responded to public needs. The literature review findings and census results indicated the public currently appear to be unaware of the service. For this reason, the support model was developed with a number of specific questions being incorporated into the bottom-tier to ensure the needs of the public are identified. In the consult circle of the ‘Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To The Operations Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service’, for example, the questions “What mechanisms are in place for the views and needs of those affected by the emergency in order to give them consideration during the emergency response?” and “Are consultation mechanisms for the public assessed for effectiveness and if so, how?” are asked. By asking these questions, a Review Team will then identify the needs of the public and make an assessment of whether those needs are actually being met.

Emergency Management stakeholders were keen to see Best Value can result in the service improving on a continuous basis. Challenging questions are asked throughout the model (exclusively within the bottom-tier) to ensure Review Team members undertake thorough investigations in order to find the answers. The outcome of this

process would be that Review Teams will potentially identify a series of actions aimed at improving the service over time, on an on-going basis rather than just as one-off activities coinciding with a formal Review event. Ultimately, the use of this support model during a Best Value Review would assist a local authority in raising the professionalism of their Emergency Management service because a thorough investigation of the service was necessary in order to answer the questions contained within the model.

It was equally important to ensure the perceived constraints to successfully adopting Best Value in Emergency Management, as identified during the census, were also considered during the modelling process. The constraints identified were ‘lack of national quality standards for the service’, ‘decreasing civil defence grant’, ‘lack of service legislation’, ‘lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Management Officers’, ‘inconsistent working boundaries’ and ‘lack of understanding of emergency management by the public’.

Whilst national Emergency Management quality standards do not currently exist, the middle-tier of the support model makes it clear to local authorities they have to undertake comparison activities and the bottom-tier expands upon this by asking a series of specific questions. In the ‘compare’ questions relating to the ‘Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To The Planning Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service’, for example, the questions asked include “How do Emergency Plans compare with those of other local authorities?”, “How do Emergency Management planning processes compare with those of other responding agencies?” and “How do 24-hour notification systems compare with those of other local

authorities?”. The ‘compare’ questions asked throughout the entire bottom-tier would ensure a local authority undertook a rigorous comparison of its service without being hindered by the lack of national indicators. Additionally, the responses obtained to these questions may also reveal limitations in existing service delivery which a Best Value Review team can then discuss and rectify in the most appropriate way or alternatively raise the issue for central government’s attention.

Decreasing funding was perceived by stakeholders as a major constraint. However, by working through the Best Value Review support model from top to bottom tiers, a local authority can determine how efficiently its current service is provided and could identify potential ways in which it could save money or find alternative sources of funding. The issues of partnership working or outsourcing, for example, could be reviewed as by considering the outcomes to the questions relating to the ‘Specific Issues Of Applying Best Value To The Operations Aspect Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service’, i.e. “Are there any external agencies that can deliver the overall response on behalf of the local authority?” and “Are there any external agencies that can deliver part of the response on behalf of the local authority?”.

The results described in the previous chapter revealed many stakeholders hope new civil protection legislation will be enacted clearly detailing what is expected of a local authority Emergency Management service. In the absence of any such legislation, the top-tier of this model has been developed with the aim of clearly defining the full remit of the service including the operations phase through the activities to be

undertaken during the response to an emergency in the absence of any clear central government prescription of the remit of an Emergency Management service.

Lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Management professionals was also identified by this analysis as a potential constraint to achieving a successful Review. The middle and bottom-tiers of the support model aim to overcome this constraint by initially applying Best Value principles generically to the Emergency Management service, before providing the specific questions which must be answered in each of the component parts of the process. The middle-tier of the model, for example, asks a Review Team to challenge its Emergency Management service managerial activity by asking questions in relation to why and how they provide an Emergency Management service. The bottom-tier of the support model then details six specific questions the Team must answer in order to achieve this challenge.

Whilst inconsistent working boundaries were considered by stakeholders as being a potential constraint, the research recognised from the census there is currently no national consistency as to how the service is delivered, e.g. some local authorities work to unitary boundaries, some to shire county boundaries, some to a combination of both. For this reason, and because the 'Local Government Act 1999' requires all types of local authority to subject all their services to Best Value, the model was developed to be generic in nature so it could be applied to any local authority regardless of the structure to which they work. This means Single and Two Tier Emergency Management Best Value Review teams must consider all questions asked within each explanatory diagram of this tier as opposed to some questions being aimed at the Shire County and others at the Shire District. The literature review



suggested some Two Tier local authorities are uncertain where responsibility for the delivery of an Emergency Management service rests, i.e. with the Shire County or with the Shire District or with both. As Best Value is to be applied to all local authority services, application of this Review model by an Emergency Management provider could potentially assist a Review team in encouraging a greater sense of service ownership and responsibility within a local authority that is currently uncertain of its exact obligations in relation to this service. This could be achieved as the Best Value Review support model has been developed in a matrix structure with the top tier showing the remit of an Emergency Management service and implicitly shows what would be expected of a local authority in preparing for, and responding to an emergency. The middle tier of the model details the issues that should be considered when implementing Best Value with the bottom tier detailing the questions that need to be investigated and answered in order to achieve comprehensive Best Value implementation. This application of the model can potentially assist a Review Team in raising awareness within the local authority of why and how an Emergency Management service is provided.

The final constraint identified by stakeholders was the perceived lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public. There were differing levels of interface between local authorities and their public throughout England, Scotland and Wales. To reflect these differences, the middle and bottom-tiers detail the questions local authorities must be able to answer during an Emergency Management Best Value Review. Local authorities with a closer link to the public would perhaps find these questions easier to answer because of their existing interface mechanisms. As with the issue of working boundaries, the model is applicable to all local

authorities regardless of the differences in local authority/public interface. This was achieved by ensuring the support model did not assume any prior interface had taken place between the local authority and the public or indeed that any specific consultation mechanisms were already in place. Those local authorities with little interface with the public may find it more difficult to answer these questions compared with those authorities already with mechanisms in place to facilitate public consultation. This would be evident from the resultant outcomes from the Best Value Review process through a critique of the narrative provided to the relevant questions and acts as one of a number of indicators of the extent to which Best Value is being realised by the Emergency Management provider under Review.

Analysis of the census data revealed a number of significant and non-statistically significant associations (Tables 6.10. and 6.11.). As discussed earlier in this chapter, because the 'Four Cs' form the legal requirement of a Best Value Review these, rather than the hypotheses or associations identified following census analysis, formed the basis of the proposed support model. However, these associations and their potential implications upon effective Best Value implementation were considered during the development of the proposed Review support model. Significant associations were found to exist between a large and diverse number of issues ranging from Civil Defence Grant status and perception of Elected Member supportiveness of the Emergency Management service to the perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the U.K. and level of support for national performance indicators. Similarly, a wide range of non-statistically significant associations were also then identified including level of confidence in community awareness of the Emergency

Management service and perception the service can be improved by Best Value as well as local authority structure and perception of current working boundaries.

Whilst the 'Four Cs' formed the structure of the Best Value Review support model it was essential to incorporate the various associations into that structure.

Unfortunately, the majority of associations did not directly map onto a particular 'C' but instead were implicit within a number of the Review drivers. For this reason, most of the questions contained in the diagrams of the bottom tier of the model were devised so Emergency Management Best Value Review teams investigated a number of related issues rather than individual issues (as identified from stakeholder perception). For example, the earlier mentioned significant association between the perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the U.K. and level of support for national performance indicators impacted upon both the 'compare' and 'compete' aspects of Best Value. This impacted upon 'compare' because Best Value requires local authorities to benchmark their services against those provided by others and influenced 'compete' because Best Value requires local authorities to prove their services are competitive in relation to those provided by others. Therefore, this particular association was incorporated into the 'compare' and 'compete' aspects of the various diagrams. For example, when considering the 'operations' aspect of the Emergency Management model, a Review team are asked within the 'compare' part of the diagram 'how does the speed of the local authority's response to an emergency compare with other local authorities?' whilst the 'compete' part of the same diagram asks 'are there any external agencies that can deliver the overall response on behalf of the local authority?'.

However, some associations did map more directly with the ‘Four Cs’. For example, a number of associations were found that involved the local community such as level of confidence in providing an Emergency Management service reflecting local community needs and the perception that Best Value can improve the service. These associations related explicitly to the ‘consult’ aspect of Best Value that required local authorities to actively seek the involvement of its local community in the planning and delivery of its services. For this reason, each diagram of the bottom tier in the ‘consult’ aspect encouraged Best Value Review teams to engage with the local community. For example, in the ‘consult’ aspect of the diagram considering the ‘planning’ part of the Emergency Management service Best Value Review teams are asked amongst other things ‘How does the local authority consult with the public during planning?’. The outcome of this question, when considered alongside the other questions in this part of the diagram, would allow a Best Value Review team to assess how the effectiveness of its current public consultation mechanisms.

### Evaluating The Best Value Review Support Model

Once the support model had been developed in its prototype form it was then necessary to evaluate it in order to assess whether it could achieve its aim of facilitating the implementation of a comprehensive Emergency Management Best Value Review. Chapter Eight details the evaluation process undertaken and the subsequent findings with critical evaluation.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT – EVALUATION OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BEST VALUE REVIEW SUPPORT MODEL**

### Introduction:

This chapter details how the Best Value Review support model devised as part of this research has been evaluated. Evaluation was vital to ensure the model can achieve its aim of assisting local authorities in implementing a comprehensive, robust Emergency Management Best Value Review. As discussed earlier in Chapter Five, this model evaluation process consisted of two stages. Stage One entailing the six follow-up interviewees being asked to consider an initial draft of the model by applying their experiences of an Emergency Management Best Value Review. The second stage saw members of the E.P.S.'s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group participating in a critical evaluation exercise. Evaluation of these findings along with a clear explanation of how the model has been modified as a result are considered in this chapter. The amended model will be presented in the final part of the chapter.

### **Best Value Review Support Model Evaluation Stage 1:**

#### Method Of Evaluation:

In recognition of the fact that Best Value was a new legal requirement for local authorities and local authorities were constantly refining their approaches to Best Value, the author was keen to carry out an initial evaluation of the review process at the end of the first year of this new statutory duty. The purpose of this initial evaluation was to assess whether the support model had the potential (subject to revisions and refinements) to be implemented within a local authority Emergency Management provision. Three options for initial evaluation were considered appropriate for this model:

- Option 1 – To distribute the model, along with an explanatory letter requesting constructive feedback, to all Emergency Management stakeholders who participated in the census and indicated their willingness to participate in follow-up research;
- Option 2 – To distribute the model, along with an explanatory letter requesting constructive feedback, to all Emergency Management stakeholders who completed the follow-up postal questionnaire and expressed an interest in taking part in further research;
- Option 3 – To incorporate evaluation of the support model into the six follow-up interviews described in the research methodology chapter.

The first option considered was to seek the views of all those stakeholders who participated in the census and expressed a willingness to participate in future follow-up research. The views of these stakeholders would be sought by devising a letter clearly explaining the background to the model's development as well as its intended purpose during a Best Value Review. A copy of the support model would accompany this letter and all recipients would be asked to provide constructive feedback. This option offered a potential way of obtaining feedback from 578 Emergency Management stakeholders. However, this option was discarded because whilst it was a way of obtaining a large volume of data, the quality of such data would have been questionable when considering many respondents would not have any first hand experience of applying Best Value to their service. In some instances, respondents may not even have had any direct contact whatsoever with the Best Value process.

Option number two would have also seen the support model and an accompanying explanatory letter seeking constructive criticism being issued to all Emergency Management stakeholders who completed the follow-up postal questionnaire indicating a willingness to take part in further research. This option offered a potential way of eliciting the views of 142 stakeholders. This option was also discarded because the vast majority of Emergency Management stakeholders who returned a follow-up postal questionnaire had indicated their service had not yet implemented a Best Value Review. Effectively this option, as with the first, could have resulted in a substantial amount of feedback, however, the completeness of such feedback would have been questionable

when considering the lack of actual experience of applying Best Value criteria to the actual service.

The final option of incorporating an interim model evaluation into the six follow-up interviews was considered to be the most appropriate way of evaluating this model because it would obtain constructive feedback from stakeholders with practical experience of subjecting their service to an actual Best Value Review. The stakeholders chosen for interview were selected based upon their differing perceptions of Best Value being applied to local authority Emergency Management (as shown in Table 5.10.). Additionally, these interviewees also represented a mix of differing types of local authority in different geographical locations within the U.K.. It was believed this option would ensure the model was considered constructively by those who could consider it by applying their own practical experiences to it. Prior to the interviews taking place, each interviewee was sent a copy of the model (along with an accompanying explanatory letter as detailed in Chapter Five). By issuing the model in advance of the interviews, each interviewee had time to study it in detail in order to identify strengths, limitations and gaps for discussion during the actual one-to-one interview.

#### Evaluation Findings:

During the follow-up interviews, each interviewee was asked a series of five questions in relation to the Best Value Review support model; “Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Management to what extent do you agree/disagree with this



model?”, “What do you feel are the model’s strengths?”, “What do you feel are the model’s limitations?”, “Can you suggest any modifications to improve the model?” and “To what extent would this model have helped during your Review process?”.

The rationale for each of these questions was discussed during the earlier research methodology chapter. The following section of this chapter will focus upon the actual findings obtained as a result of asking these questions. The notes of the six follow-up interviews are shown in Appendix R.

#### The Level Of Agreement And Disagreement With The Best Value Review Support

##### Model:

When considering the appropriateness of the support model, each tier was considered individually before focussing upon the model in its entirety.

##### Top-tier: The Remit Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service

Each interviewee was asked “*Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Management to what extent do you agree/disagree with the top-tier of this support model?*”. Interviewee One stated he was in total agreement as it clearly portrayed the full remit of the service, not just the ‘preparation (pre-incident phase)’. He commented it was particularly useful to have the true scope of the service portrayed diagrammatically. Similarly, Interviewee Two was also supportive of the model’s top-tier because he

believed it provided an accurate reflection of the service. Interviewee Three also agreed, citing it clearly identified the full extent of the service provision. He commented the service activities identified in this tier mirrored those used to form the basis of his own recent Review's process benchmarking exercise. He explained his authority already undertook many of the activities identified in this tier, but for those currently not undertaken (e.g. business continuity), arrangements are now being put in place as a result of his Best Value Review to fill these identified service gaps. Interviewee Four expressed his full support for the tier explaining it clearly detailed the entire extent of the service, something he believed he had never seen displayed anywhere else before, either locally or nationally. Interviewee Five also agreed with this tier of the support model because he believed it clearly portrayed the service to be much wider in scope than just comprising of planning activities.

Interviewees One, Two, Three and Four did not disagree in any way with this tier. However, Interviewee Five disagreed with the way in which the immediate response aspects of the service were presented. He believed it gave the impression that in the immediate response to an emergency, a local authority Crisis Management Team would be established after providing support to the emergency services when in fact it is the Crisis Management Team that instigate the support given to the emergency services.

Interviewee Six, whilst in broad agreement with this tier, perceived it could be strengthened in a number of ways. He felt there was the potential for possible confusion in the operations side of the tier as a result of the wording. For example, the local

authority's role is defined when using terms such as "to adopt buildings for use as ..."

whereas the role of the Emergency Management professional is defined when terms such as "to arrange ...", "to organise ..." or "to ensure that ..." are used. Interviewee Six also highlighted a change in operational terminology was required as the term 'rest centre' is now used rather than the previous term 'evacuation reception centre'. Finally, Interviewee Six explained in his experience, the provision of trauma counselling (as identified in the immediate response aspect of the tier) should actually be addressed in the long-term recovery phase of the service as a welfare issue. Instead, he felt in the immediate response to an emergency, personal support would be provided to those affected. The author will discuss these identified limitations, and subsequent modifications made to the top-tier of the prototype, later in this chapter.

Overall the interviewees were broadly supportive with the top-tier of the model believing it did, with the exception of the suggested and subsequently implemented minor modifications, accurately reflect the local authority Emergency Management service.

#### Middle-tier: Applying Best Value Generically To The Local Authority Emergency Management Service

The focus of the questioning then moved to identify the extent to which interviewees agreed or disagree with the middle-tier of the support model that concentrated upon applying Best Value generically to the service. Interviewee One considered this tier provided a good visual starting point to focus the mind when embarking upon a Best

Value Review. He perceived it applied Best Value to all aspects of the service, something he felt had not been able to achieve in his own recent Emergency Management Best Value Review as many of the issues were too difficult to address and therefore were ignored, e.g. the issue of 'compete' in relation to the operations phase of the service. Indeed, he considered if this model had been available, it would have clearly identified to all Review team members the full range of issues which must be subsequently investigated in order to ensure reliable outcomes and a complete Review being achieved. Interviewee Two also supported this tier and cited its versatility as being one of its key strengths. For example, this tier visually presents the 'Cs' in the sequence of 'challenge', 'compare', 'consult' and 'compete', however, the guidance notes accompanying the model clearly state it should be used alongside a local authority's corporately agreed approach to conducting a Best Value Review. Interviewee Two commented his authority had agreed to tackle 'challenge' as the final phase in a Best Value Review in order to conclude and identify options for future delivery based upon the findings obtained from the other three 'Cs'. Despite this difference in sequencing of the 'Cs', he concluded the model was versatile as it could have been tailored it to fit with his authority's corporate approach while still ensuring the identified issues and questions were fully investigated. In addition, he felt this tier could be used by any local authority regardless of its structure or how it delivered its Emergency Management service, say by in-house Emergency Management professionals or through a central Emergency Planning Unit, because of its completeness and versatility. He considered this versatility as being essential so as to reflect the different approaches to Best Value Reviews being adopted throughout the U.K.. Similarly, Interviewee Three supported this presentation as he perceived it clearly

identified all the necessary questions to be considered during a Best Value Review and therefore provides a useful starting point for those just embarking upon implementing such a process. Interviewee Four agreed with this middle-tier (as a result of his own experiences) and stated if all areas of questioning were answered, then a thorough Review would take place. Interviewee Four considered his own recent Review of Emergency Management had not fully considered nor resolved issues concerning the ‘compete’ part of Best Value. He believed this tier would have been extremely useful when his own authority had first commissioned their service Review as it explains many of the “grey” areas of Best Value by clearly stating the questions to be asked of the service. He also felt the format of the tier could be regarded as an example of best practice as it could be adapted to any type of local authority service. Interviewee Five also expressed support for the tier as he considered it provided a good introduction to applying Best Value principles to the Emergency Management service. Similarly, Interviewee Six believed the tier presented an overall view of the entire Review process and the specific areas needed to be addressed when applying the process to the Emergency Management service.

Interviewees One, Two, Three, Four and Five did not object to any aspect of the middle-tier of the model. However, Interviewee Six perceived one limitation. He considered the amount of text contained in the tier was excessive and should be reduced in order to make it easier to understand and be more reader friendly. The author agreed with these comments.

Overall, each interviewee was in agreement with this tier as they considered it presented fully the key issues to be explored in order to achieve an effective Best Value Review and, through the guidance given in its accompanying notes for use, allowed versatility in the way these could be addressed by a Review team.

Bottom-tier: Applying Best Value To The Specific Components Of The local Authority Emergency Management Service

Finally, the six interviewees were asked to apply their own experiences of Emergency Management Best Value Reviews to the bottom-tier of the model in order to determine whether they agreed with the information contained in the five explanatory diagrams. All interviewees were in broad agreement with the questions posed within each diagram of this tier as all believed each of the 'Four Cs' had been related directly to the service. Whilst none of the interviewees disagreed with any of these questions, several did highlight limitations. These limitations, and subsequent modifications, will be discussed subsequently within this chapter.

Once each individual tier of the support model had been discussed, it was then possible to ask interviewees to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the entire model by considering all three tiers collectively and assessing the model's potential as a tool for facilitating the successful implementation of a Best Value Review in Emergency Management. All six interviewees expressed their strong support for this prototype, as shown in Table 8.1.

<u>Reasons For Supporting The Best Value Review Support Model</u>	
<u>Tier:</u>	<u>Reasons For Support:</u>
Top-tier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows accurate reflection of the full remit of the Emergency Management service (i.e. pre and post-incident)</li> <li>• Displays Emergency Management service in a way that is clear to understand</li> <li>• This is a unique way of presenting the service.</li> </ul>
Middle-tier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good visual starting point for Emergency Management Best Value Review teams.</li> <li>• Explains many of the “grey areas” of Best Value.</li> <li>• Applies Best Value to the entire service (i.e. pre and post incident).</li> <li>• Versatile, i.e. can be used by different types of local authority providing Emergency Management in different ways as well as dovetailing with different local authority approaches to Best Value.</li> <li>• Format could be used as example of best practice and applied to other local authority services.</li> </ul>
Bottom-tier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displays the questions to consider to ensure the application of each of the ‘Four Cs’ to all activities within an Emergency Management service.</li> </ul>

Table 8.1.: Reasons For Supporting The Best Value Review Support Model

At this point the focus of evaluation shifted to identifying the perceived strengths and limitations of the support model.

#### The Perceived Strengths Of The Best Value Review Support Model:

Each interviewee was asked “*What do you feel are the model’s strengths?*”. All six interviewees shared the opinion a key strength of the model was it mapped the application of the prescribed Best Value criteria to each aspect of the Emergency

Management provision. When developing the model, the author not only incorporated the four recognised Emergency Management areas of activity as defined by the E.P.S. (2000), but also included a fifth element of ‘managerial activity’. Each interviewee agreed this additional activity was important, viewing it was a pivotal part of an Emergency Management service. It was felt the top tier of the model would be especially useful for those officers who would be expected to participate in a Best Value Review but who perhaps did not have a full appreciation of the service, e.g. Best Value Officers and trade union representatives. Interviewee One believed this tier could have a dual purpose as it could also be used during Emergency Management awareness raising training sessions.

All of the interviewees were positive regarding the format of the final two tiers of the model. Interviewee Three considered the support model could be utilised as an ‘off-the-shelf’ package whereby individual local authorities apply it to fit their own local circumstances in order to self-assess their current Emergency Management service and identify options for future service delivery. Indeed, Interviewee Three commented that if he was about to embark upon another Review, he would be confident that he could use the support model, in-line with its accompanying guidance notes, in order to make an assessment of the standard of current service delivery and identify problem issues for resolution in order to improve future service delivery. He also felt other local authorities should be able to use the model in the same manner to evaluate their current Emergency Management provision. The interviewees felt the middle and bottom-tiers of the model clearly identified where investigation was needed in order to achieve a comprehensive



Review of the service. They considered that these two tiers would help to overcome the danger of concentrating upon those aspects of the service that can be more easily measured (daily occurring activities such as planning and liaison) and then giving these higher importance above those current operational aspects of the service perceived to be more difficult to measure (actual emergency response activities). Several of the interviewees acknowledged certain Emergency Management activities had been overlooked during their own recent Best Value Reviews.

Whilst the interviewees represented different types of local authorities and delivered their Emergency Management services in differing ways, they all considered the support model was capable of dovetailing with their (own) authority's corporate approach as it was considered to be flexible enough to be implemented regardless of a local authority's circumstances and without compromising the model's potential effectiveness. For example, Interviewee One used 'challenge' at the start his Emergency Management Best Value Review to determine the questions that needed to be answered through the duration of the Review. In addition, 'challenge' continued throughout the duration of his Review and was used as a way to assess the overall rigour of the Review. In contrast, Interviewee Two's Emergency Management Best Value Review did not consider 'challenge' until the very end of the process as it was used to conclude the Review and identify options for future improved service delivery. These examples indicated the support model was flexible enough to allow Review teams to customise it to align with their authority's chosen approach to Best Value thereby allowing local Emergency Management services to embed their local authority's strategies into their Review

process, as directed by the first point in the model's guidance notes: "This model should be used alongside a local authority's corporately agreed approach to conducting a Best Value Review which should include details of how services are to be reviewed ...". The interviewees also perceived it would have been possible for them to have implemented this model within their differing local authorities because it was capable of transcending the issues of funding, legislation, performance measurement, culture and organisation as well as public perception. All six interviewees represented local authorities that received differing levels of Civil Defence Grant, some whose grant allocation had increased over recent years and others whose had decreased substantially. In addition, some of the interviewees were from authorities that made an in-house financial contribution towards the cost of delivering the service, whilst others were not. Despite these differences, all interviewees felt the support model could be implemented within their authority. Several of the interviewees in their earlier census responses had expressed the opinion the current legislative base underpinning local authority Emergency Management provision was inadequate. However, none of the interviewees considered the current status of the legislation would impact upon the model's usage during a Best Value Review. Interviewee One, for example in relation to performance measurement, perceived the comparison activities of his own Review had been hampered as a direct result of the lack of national Emergency Management standards. However, he felt the support model provided guidance in relation to how Emergency Management services could be compared. Culture and organisational issues were identified from the census as being important influencing issues in Emergency Management delivery. Interviewees represented local authorities with a mix of differing geographical locations, structures ,

high-level support and working boundaries. Despite these differences, all Interviewees felt Best Value Review support model implementation was possible. Finally, in relation to public perception, Interviewees Four and Five commented that their recent Reviews had not included consultation with the public as this had been considered too difficult an issue to resolve. Both Interviewees believed the model provided guidance in the area of public consultation, something which had not been provided by any other source.

Collectively, these views confirmed that despite the acknowledged flaws within the current composition of local authority Emergency Management provision the model has successfully overcome these by focussing upon the questions and issues which a Review team would be expected to investigate in order to comply with Best Value legislation rather than endeavouring to resolve current funding, legislative, performance measurement, cultural public perception deficiencies outright. The purpose of any support model would be to assist local authority Best Value Review teams in diagnosing the current status of Emergency Management delivery by identifying strengths and limitations, rather than perhaps unreasonably be expected to provide solutions to all limitations identified. The support model had been developed to assist local authorities in implementing effective Reviews rather than them wait for central government to resolve these issues and convey instructions for subsequent action. Each interviewee also considered this support model went into much greater depth than any existing central government or E.P.S. guidance, not only in defining the scope of a local authority Emergency Management service, but in identifying the issues to investigate during a Best Value Review of the service. A summary of the support model's perceived strengths is shown in Table 8.2.

Perceived Strengths Of The Best Value Review Support Model

- Clearly displays the full scope of the Emergency Management service (pre and post-incident) including managerial activities;
- Identifies the issues to be investigated when implementing a Best Value Review of the Emergency Management service;
- Focusses upon all aspects of the service not just those ‘easier’ to measure non-operational activities;
- Top-tier especially useful for those expected to participate in Review but with no/little prior knowledge of Emergency Management service (and could be used as stand-alone training tool);
- Applicable to all local authorities regardless of structure of how service is delivered;
- Can dovetail with individual local authority’s corporate approach to Best Value, i.e. ‘Cs’ can be addressed in any sequence/combination;
- The model is especially relevant for an Emergency Management service being reviewed as a stand-alone service;
- Model is more detailed than any existing guidance.

Table 8.2.: Perceived Strengths Of The Best Value Review Support Model

The Perceived Limitations Of The Best Value Review Support Model:

In contrast to the earlier question, all interviewees were then asked to identify limitations within the support model developed. While all interviewees had expressed their earlier positive support for the model, they were also able to provide, by applying their own experiences, constructive feedback regarding the support model. Whilst this feedback did not identify any major structural changes, it did identify several limitations with the model which will now be discussed by considering each tier individually before considering the model in its entirety.

### Top-tier: The Remit Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service

Interviewee One believed the lack of reference within this tier to long-term recovery strategies in the operations phase of the service was a potential limitation as the model did not expressly show local authorities are expected to assume the lead role in ensuring their area returns to normality following an emergency. He perceived a key strength of this tier of the model was that it clearly defined all activities within an Emergency Management service and for this reason he felt it was vital no area of service activity was omitted. Similarly, Interviewee Five considered several factors that influence the managerial aspect of the service were not reflected in this tier, including quality standards, local and national influences over politics and funding as well as Chief Officers' attitude towards the service. He also believed the top-tier should clearly show a recognised outcome of effective liaison in his experience is an increased awareness of the Emergency Management service.

### Middle-tier: Applying Best Value Generically To The Local Authority Emergency Management Service

Interviewee Four believed this tier should contain an explicit reference to continuous improvement (the 'Fifth C' of Best Value) rather than merely implying the need to achieve this goal. Interviewee Six expressed the concern this tier contained too much text, something he felt could discourage or confuse potential users.

### Bottom-tier: Applying Best Value To The Specific Components Of The local Authority Emergency Management Service

Interviewee Three was unsure how easily this bottom tier of the support model could be applied by a local authority conducting a cross-cutting Emergency Management Best Value Review as opposed to a stand-alone service review. He felt the entire model, and in particular the questions contained in the explanatory diagrams, clearly relate to the Emergency Management service. However, this interviewee questioned whether the model would be so easy to use if other local authority departments were asked to scrutinise their input into the Emergency Management service. For example, Education Departments were asked to scrutinise the provision of their schools for use as rest centres or Treasurers Departments asked to investigate procedures for setting up and administering a Disaster Appeal Fund. Indeed, since completing the first year of Best Value Reviews, Interviewee Three's local authority had altered its corporate approach to conducting reviews to ensure future reviews adopt a more strategic focus dealing with issues on a cross-cutting basis wherever possible. Interviewee Five considered the model did not instruct a Best Value Review team to challenge the types of emergency to which the local authority either does or does not respond. He felt appropriate questions should be incorporated into the relevant diagrams in the bottom-tier of the model to ensure this fundamental issue was challenged. Similarly, he felt the explanatory diagram relating to training did not sufficiently consider the issue of the training needs of Emergency Management professionals. Interviewee Five considered the likelihood of an Emergency Management service being able to successfully strive towards continuous improvement

would be strongly influenced by the abilities of the Emergency Management professionals employed within the service. Finally, Interviewees Two, Three and Six echoed Interviewee Four's earlier comment regarding the need for Emergency Management Best Value Review teams to have regard for achieving continuous improvement within the service. The interviewees commented it was essential questions contained in all explanatory diagrams were worded in such a way as to make it clear to users maintaining the status quo in service delivery was not an option. For example, the question 'Are there any external agencies which can provide the liaison forum(s)?' should be re-worded to read 'To what extent could other organisation(s) assist in performing liaison activities in either whole or part in a better way and how?', thereby conveying to a support model user that simply identifying an alternative provider is not sufficient as the alternative provider must be able to provide the service in a better way.

When considering all three tiers collectively, Interviewees Two and Six stated the links between the differing tiers should be strengthened to assist users with cross-referencing. For example, they felt the existing cross-referencing in the middle-tier of the model was very easy to overlook as it was not explicitly referenced in each 'consideration' box but was merely cited as a footnote. For this reason, Interviewees Two and Six felt there was a real danger model users would either lose or over-look pertinent information. These interviewees believed this problem could be overcome if cross-referencing was explicitly built into each individual question asked. For example, the middle tier diagram considers the Best Value requirement of 'compare' in relation to the 'managerial' activity of Emergency Management by asking model users to "Question how efficiently the service

is provided compared to other geographical areas”. Explicit cross-referencing has been incorporated immediately after this with the instruction “(refer to Diagram 1)”. This change was considered imperative if the model was ever to be adopted as a national standard. A summary of the several limitations identified in the support model are shown in Table 8.3.

<u>Perceived Limitations Of The Best Value Review Support Model</u>	
Top-tier:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of reference to long-term recovery strategies;</li> <li>• Several influencing managerial aspects omitted;</li> <li>• The outcomes from having an effective liaison activity should be strengthened.</li> </ul>
Middle-tier:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is too much text which could discourage potential users;</li> <li>• The model should explicitly reference the need to achieve continuous improvement rather than merely imply it in the questions asked.</li> </ul>
Bottom-tier:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no requirement for local authorities to challenge the types of emergency to which they do and do not respond;</li> <li>• There is no requirement to consider the training needs of Emergency Management professionals;</li> <li>• Some questions should be re-worded to make it explicitly clear to users that maintaining the existing status quo is not an option and that Review Teams must strive to achieve continuous improvement within the service.</li> </ul>
Overall:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The linkage and cross-referencing between tiers must be improved to make the model easier to use;</li> <li>• Consideration should be given as to how the model could be strengthened for use during a cross-cutting Emergency Management Best Value Review.</li> </ul>

Table 8.3.: Perceived Limitations Of The Best Value Review Support Model

The limitations detailed in Table 8.3. show that with the exception of several cosmetic changes to the top and middle tiers, as well as minor rather than substantive changes in the bottom tier, interviewees regarded the matrix structured model positively.



Suggested Modifications To Improve The Best Value Review Support Model:

As expected during the evaluation of this support model, a number of limitations were identified. All interviewees were asked for their suggestions as to how these limitations could be overcome and the model subsequently strengthened. Modifications were considered on a tier by tier basis.

Top-tier: The Remit Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service

Interviewees were initially asked to suggest modifications to the top-tier of the model as the author considered any alterations made to this tier could potentially impact upon subsequent tiers of the prototype. Whilst Interviewees One, Two, Three and Four did not have any suggestions as to how this tier could be strengthened, Interviewees Five and Six did suggest several modifications. Interviewee Five believed several factors that influence the managerial aspect of the Emergency Management service were not identified. He cited in his experience quality standards, local and national influences over politics and funding as well as Chief Officers' attitudes towards Emergency Management all impact upon how the service is managed. He considered it was vitally important the support model acknowledged these 'influencers', so Best Value Review teams could clearly have regard for them. Interviewee Five also held the belief this tier must show an outcome of effective liaison processes should be an increased awareness of the service. Again, by incorporating this into the model, it should ensure that the importance of Emergency Management liaison processes are clearly understood by, and subsequently investigated by, Best Value Review teams. Finally, Interviewee Five

pointed out that in the operational phase of the service, a local authority Crisis Management Team must first be established in order for a local authority to be able to provide support to the emergency services. However, he felt this tier of the model currently suggested support was first given to the emergency services and then a Crisis Management Team was formed.

Interviewee Six highlighted references to ‘evacuation reception centres’ should now be termed ‘rest centres’ to reflect current terminology. He also pointed out in his experience of operational response, ‘the provision of trauma counselling’ would not take place during the immediate response to an emergency but would instead be provided in the long-term as a ‘welfare issue’. He considered the immediate response activity should acknowledge those affected by an emergency would in reality be offered ‘personal support’ as opposed to ‘trauma counselling’. Finally, he believed there was some confusion within this particular tier. The preparatory ‘pre-incident’ aspect of the tier clearly defined the work that would be undertaken by the Emergency Management professionals in delivering an Emergency Management service. However, the operational ‘post-incident’ phase defined the work that would be undertaken by the actual local authority service departments and not the Emergency Management professionals in responding to an emergency. For example, it would be the role of Emergency Management professionals to ‘arrange’ or ‘organise’ or ‘assist’ rather than ‘provide’ or ‘implement’. He stressed the need for consistency in both sides of the support model.

None of the modifications suggested by Interviewees Five and Six contradicted each other. All suggested modifications were accepted and subsequently incorporated into the

model. A summary of the requested modifications is shown in Table 8.4. The actual modifications made to the support model following this interim evaluation will be discussed later in this chapter.

<u>Top-tier Modifications:</u>	
<u>Area Of Model:</u>	<u>Modification(s):</u>
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No modifications suggested.</li> </ul>
Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State an outcome of effective liaison processes should be an increased awareness of the service.</li> </ul>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No modifications suggested.</li> </ul>
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate quality standards, local and national influences over politics, and Chief Officers' attitude towards the Emergency Management service as factors influencing the management aspect of the service.</li> </ul>
Operations – Immediate Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis Management Team must be established first in order to be able to provide support to the emergency services;</li> <li>• Alter wording to reflect current terminology;</li> <li>• Remove trauma counselling and replace with personal support;</li> <li>• Reword activities to reflect the actual role of the service during the immediate response and not those activities that would be undertaken by other local authority service departments.</li> </ul>
Operations – Long-term Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insert welfare issue;</li> <li>• Reword activities to reflect the actual role of the service during the long-term recovery and not those activities that would be undertaken by other local authority service departments.</li> </ul>

Table 8.4.: Top-tier Modifications

### Middle-tier: Applying Best Value Generically To The Local Authority Emergency Management Service

Interviewees were then asked to focus upon the middle-tier of the model and make any modifications which they considered would improve it. Interviewee Four expressed a very strong belief this tier of the model must incorporate an explicit link between undergoing a Best Value Review and achieving continuous improvement in the service delivery. Indeed, this belief mirrored the comment made by Sparke (1999) in Chapter 7 that Best Value is *“a demanding challenge, requiring local authorities to seek continuous improvement in service costs and quality”*. Interviewee Four felt such a reference would clearly show Best Value as being an on-going process which, if undertaken correctly, results in improvement actions being identified, implemented and monitored not just for the duration of a Review but over several years before the service is required to undergo another Review.

Interviewee Six voiced the concern this tier contained too much text. He suggested by varying the introductory wording in each box contained in this tier it would be possible to condense the question without losing the instruction contained within it. For example, as an alternative to saying in the managerial challenge box “Ask questions in relation to why and how they provide an Emergency Management service” consider instead “Question how and why you provide an Emergency Management service”. He felt these changes, combined with the individual elements of the Emergency Management service and the

Best Value Review process being boxed, should make the middle-tier more reader friendly.

The modifications suggested by Interviewees Four and Six neither contradicted nor conflicted with each other. The author will detail later in this chapter how these modifications have been incorporated into the support model.

Interviewees One, Two, Three and Five did not have any suggested modifications for this tier.

<u>Middle-tier Modifications</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incorporate an explicit reference to continuous improvement to reinforce Best Value should be an on-going process and not a one-off activity.</li><li>• Alter the wording of the questions in this model in order to reduce the amount of text in the tier but without compromising the clarity of each question.</li></ul>

Table 8.5.: Middle-tier Modifications

Bottom-tier: Applying Best Value To The Specific Components Of The local Authority Emergency Management Service

Finally, interviewees were asked to suggest ways in which the bottom-tier could be improved. As several interviewees stated that Emergency Management Best Value Reviews should result in the identification of actions to improve the service on an on-going basis, the author considered this process could be assisted if the questions contained in all explanatory diagrams of the bottom-tier were re-worded to ensure it was

not possible for a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response to be given. This would ensure model users undertook a thorough investigation before making an in-depth response to any question in the tier in the form of a detailed narrative. Each diagram contained in the bottom-tier was discussed in isolation.

#### Diagram 1 – The Best Value Process Applied To The Managerial Process Of Emergency Management

The first diagram applied Best Value to the Managerial process of the service. Interviewees One, Two, Three, Four and Six did not have any modifications to suggest. However, Interviewee Five recommended the question “do you consult with external stakeholders about the entire package of the Emergency Management service?” (in the ‘consult’ aspect of the diagram) should be re-worded to say “do you consult with external stakeholders about the nature of the entire package of the Emergency Management service?”. His rationale for this was to ensure external stakeholders are not just told about what the service is but they are given the opportunity to have a say in what the service should be about. Similarly, he believed the same question aimed at the public be re-worded as well. He also suggested a new question be incorporated to ensure the views of internal stakeholders be considered; “do you consult with internal stakeholders about the nature of the entire package of the Emergency Management service?”. Several interviewees also requested minor wording modifications to certain questions in order to ensure a Best Value Review results in Emergency Management services improving. For example, the question “Are there any external agencies able to deliver all or parts of the service?” (in the ‘compete’ aspect of the diagram) should be re-worded to “Are there any

external agencies able to deliver all or parts of the service in a better way?”. The incorporation of these modifications into Diagram 1 of the bottom-tier will be discussed later in this chapter.

#### Diagram 2 – The Best Value Process Applied To The Planning Process Of Emergency Management

The second diagram concentrated upon the application of Best Value to the Planning activity of the service. Interviewees One, Two, Three, Four and Six did not have any suggested modifications for incorporation into this diagram. Interviewee Five recommended the ‘compete’ aspect of this diagram could be strengthened by stating a Review Team should attempt to identify new customers to whom they could offer an Emergency Management service. Whilst many stakeholders perceive Best Value as being a threatening exercise in which local authority services can be out-sourced, Interviewee Five believed there were elements of opportunity for authorities to explore as well. He also felt the ‘consult’ aspect should be enhanced by considering the question “why are you consulting these stakeholders?”. He considered this question would ensure an Emergency Management Best Value Review Team identified current consultees and determined why they were consulted with in order to ensure it was for a justified reason and not merely for the sake of being seen to consult. Again, these proposed modifications will be discussed later in this chapter when the author explains the alterations made to the support model as a result of this initial evaluation.

### Diagram 3 – The Best Value Process Applied To The Liaison Process Of Emergency Management

No modifications were suggested for this particular diagram as all interviewees were satisfied it presented a realistic application of the 'Four Cs' to the liaison process of the service.

### Diagram 4 – The Best Value Process Applied To The Training Process Of Emergency Management

The fourth diagram sought to apply Best Value principles to the training activities of the service. Interviewees One, Two, Three, Four and Six were in complete agreement with this diagram. However, Interviewee Five considered it was essential for the diagram to reflect the importance of identifying and filling the training needs of Emergency Management professionals. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Interviewee Five held this opinion because he did not believe it was realistically possible for the service to improve on a continuous basis without Emergency Management professionals being trained to the highest possible standard. The incorporation of these proposed modifications into the model will be considered later in this chapter.



### Diagram 5 – The Best Value Process Applied To The Operational Process Of Emergency Management

The final diagram considered the application of Best Value principles to the operational aspect of the service. Interviewees Two, Three, Four and Six did not have any modifications. Interviewee One felt this diagram did not give enough attention to long-term recovery. He felt this could be rectified by incorporating specific questions in the ‘challenge’ and ‘compare’ aspects of the diagram, namely “Is there a recognised need for long-term recovery strategies?” and “How does your long-term recovery strategy compare?”. Interviewee Five believed it would be valuable to incorporate into this diagram the need to re-consider which risks the local authority currently plans for and responds to so as to ensure the Emergency Management service is based upon current and not historical or potentially outdated needs. These suggestions will be discussed later in this chapter.

#### Perceived Worth Of The Best Value Review Support Model:

All interviewees were asked to consider the question “*To what extent would this model have helped during your Emergency Management Best Value Review process?*”.

Interviewee One believed the model would have helped during his Review process, particularly in its early days when he felt valuable time was lost trying to determine what exactly was required. He also considered his own Review had avoided tackling many of the difficult issues of Best Value such as the potential role of alternative providers within

the delivery of the service. However, had this model been in existence, the questions to consider when tackling these difficult issues are clearly stated and could therefore not be ignored without clear justification for doing so. Similarly, Interviewee Two also claimed the model would have helped during his Review as it would have saved a considerable amount of time spent initially defining what a Review should entail. He claimed while there was lots of Best Value information available from a variety of sources in differing formats such as websites, government reports, professional journals, none was available specifically looking at Emergency Management. He perceived this support model would have provided his Review team with all the necessary information needed to start their work, with the added benefit of this being presented in a single source, in a format easy to understand. Interviewee Three also expressed the view the model in its current form would have greatly assisted him when he undertook his service Review. He also commented his authority are now adopting a more strategic focus to future Best Value Reviews and for this reason he felt modification would be needed to make the model more applicable to a cross-cutting review by not just focusing upon the Emergency Management service roles but also upon the input of each local authority Department into providing an Emergency Management service. However, Interviewee Three was unsure how this could be reflected in the support model. Interviewee Four commented positively the model would have greatly helped during his Review as it would have provided a blueprint for the Review team to follow and continuously refer to. Interview Five considered with the inclusion of his earlier mentioned modifications to the model, it would have provided the comprehensive framework for his Review team to have based their work upon. Equally, Interviewee Six was also positive in his comments, citing the

model would have provided an ideal starting point for his Best Value Review as it would have set the scene and saved a vast amount of preparatory time, which could then have been spent investigating the actual questions that needed to be answered.

Overall, each interviewee believed the support model would have helped them when implementing their Emergency Management Best Value Review. Even those interviewees who felt their service had not improved as a result of their own recent Best Value Review (as well as those who were uncertain whether improvements had been achieved), considered the model would have benefited them as it would have ensured their Reviews were more objective. For example, many of the interviewees expressed concerns that neither the operational side of their service nor the issue of public consultation had been tackled robustly enough or indeed even considered at all during any point in their own Reviews. However, they commented if this prototype had been used, it would have been more difficult to ‘avoid’ these issues as they would have been clearly identified from the outset. A summary of the findings to this question are shown in Table 8.6.

Perceived Worth Of The Best Value Review Support Model

- It would have saved valuable time at the start of the Review process as the issues for investigation are clearly defined, i.e. can focus instead upon investigation;
- Difficult issues relating to the operational side of the service are identified and therefore cannot be ignored or overlooked without justification for doing so;
- The model is unique to Emergency Management and brings together in one tool all the differing pieces of advice contained in a vast plethora of Best Value information;
- The model is presented in an easy to understand format, i.e. it provides a 'blueprint' for conducting a review;
- The model is applicable to local authority Emergency Management provision regardless of funding, legislation, performance measurement, organisation and culture and public perception.

Table 8.6.: Perceived Worth Of The Best Value Review Support Model

Modifications Made To Best Value Review Support Model Following Evaluation: Stage

1

The findings from the six interviews highlighted several modifications were needed in order to strengthen the support model. Encouragingly, the suggested modifications did not contradict the overall model structure or the philosophy underpinning the model but had more to do with specific detail and fine tuning. In the next section of this chapter, the modifications made to each tier of the model along with a clear rationale for doing so will be detailed.

### Top-tier: The Remit Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service

The first tier to be modified was the top-tier because it was felt any changes made to this tier could impact upon the subsequent tiers. Changes were first made to those activities forming part of the 'preparation (pre-incident) phase' of the service. Interviewee Four felt strongly the theme of continuous improvement should be explicitly stated in the model reflecting it is one of the main themes of Best Value. The author agreed with Interviewee Four's comment and felt the issue of continuous improvement should not only be incorporated into the actual 'Best Value' data shown in the middle and bottom-tiers but should apply to all aspects of the model in order to strengthen the model's potential as a diagnostic tool. For this reason, in the planning process of the Emergency Management service the phrase 'review' has been added to the 'monitor, amend, maintain Plan' activity already stated therefore the activity now reads 'monitor, review, amend, maintain Plan'. This ensures model users clearly appreciate producing an Emergency Plan is not a one-off activity with a clear end date as such plans are never finished and must be continuously reviewed to ensure they reflect current working practices.

The interviewees collectively believed as a result of undertaking all the activities listed in the planning process, the increased levels of preparedness will automatically be achieved. For this reason, the term 'increased preparedness' has been included in the outcomes of planning. Similarly, the phrase 'better co-ordination' has been incorporated into the outcomes section of the planning activity because the interview findings found the

activities listed in the planning process should automatically result in an improved, co-ordinated response to an emergency.

Focus then turned to the liaison activity described in the top-tier. Several interviewees commented for liaison to be as effective as possible, it must include the public and external organisations. For this reason, the author incorporated the phrases ‘consult public’, ‘advise external stakeholder organisations’, ‘public information – media/press releases, internet etc’ into the activities section of liaison. The author believes these phrases represent a number of ways in which the public can be included the liaison activity of the Emergency Management service. Interviewee Five also indicated if the public are to be involved in liaison, they will potentially have a greater understanding of the actual service. For this reason, the phrases ‘increased awareness’, ‘public knowledge’ and ‘public awareness’ were placed in the outcomes section of the liaison activity.

Training represented the final activity of the service’s preparation phase. The importance of maintaining Emergency Management training records (for both Emergency Management professionals and other local authority workers) was identified by Interviewee Six. He believes the creation of a database of skills, knowledge and training would provide a local authority with a clear record that could be used for future training purposes as well as during times of emergency response. To reflect Interviewee Six’s comments, the author incorporated the term ‘database of skills, knowledge and training’ into the activities section of the training activity. A summary of the modifications made to the preparation part of this tier is shown in Table 8.7.

Modifications Made To Pre-Incident Part Of Top-Tier:

- Continuous improvement incorporated into planning processes;
- Outcomes from planning processes strengthened;
- The need for public and external organisations to be involved in consultation reflected within liaison activities and outcomes;
- The importance of maintaining Emergency Management training records incorporated into training processes.

Table 8.7.: Modifications Made To Pre-Incident Part Of Top-Tier

Consideration was then given to the over-arching managerial activity of the service and the comments made by interviewees. The interview findings discussed earlier revealed a perception that several factors had been omitted from this area of the model. As a direct consequence, the author incorporated the terms ‘quality standards’ and ‘chief officers attitude’ into this tier. Interviewee Five agreed ‘funding’ and ‘politics’ were indeed influencing factors upon how a local authority delivers its Emergency Management service. However, in his experience, Interviewee Five felt whilst local and national attitudes towards funding and politics can often differ, both are influencing factors. To reflect this, the author incorporated the term ‘(local and national)’ after the ‘funding’ and ‘politics’ references in the model’s managerial activity of the service. These modifications are summarised in Table 8.8..

Modifications Made To Managerial Part Of Top-Tier:

The following managerial activity influences have been incorporated:

- Quality standards;
- Funding (local and national)
- Politics (local and national)
- Chief officers attitudes towards the service.

Table 8.8.: Modifications Made To Managerial Part Of Top-Tier

Once the preparation phase of the service had been modified, focus then turned to the ‘operations (post-incident)’ phase of the service. Several modifications were made to strengthen the immediate response activity. The ordering of the terms ‘support emergency services’ and ‘set up Crisis Management Team’ were swapped to reflect Interviewee Five’s comment that without a management team being established then no support could be provided. Interviewee Six highlighted a change in terminology and as a result the term ‘open evacuation reception centres’ was re-worded to read ‘open rest centres’. In addition, Interviewee Six considered the activities listed in this section related to the role of other local authority departments rather than the Emergency Management service. For consistency, he believed the activities should be reworded to reflect the role of the Emergency Management service in responding to an emergency is to arrange/organise/assist functions, while it is the role of the individual local authority service department to provide the actual functions. For example, the activities stated in this tier included ‘provide transport, labour, plant and materials’ and ‘provide short-term accommodation’ have been replaced with the terms ‘arrange provision of transport, labour, plant and materials’ and ‘arrange short-term accommodation’. Several



interviewees voiced their concerns the model may not be entirely applicable to an Emergency Management service being reviewed as a cross-cutting provision whereby all departments of a local authority scrutinise their input into the delivery of an Emergency Management service. For example, would the support model allow Social Services Departments to challenge the effectiveness of their trauma counselling provision? The author considers as a result of these modifications to the immediate response, it will now be much easier for a local authority to adapt this model for an Emergency Management cross-cutting Best Value Review as there is now clarity between the Emergency Management professional organising/arranging/co-ordinating and the service departments actually providing/deploying. For example, the role of the Emergency Management Department is explicitly stated in activities such as “arrange provision of transport, labour, plant and materials” and “organise welfare arrangements”. Whilst it is would likely be the role of the Direct Labour Organisation to “provide” and “deliver” transport, labour, plant and materials as well Social Services to “provide” and “deliver” welfare arrangements. However, if this model was to be used during a cross-cutting Best Value Review of an Emergency Management service (all departments of a local authority were to scrutinise their role within the delivery of an Emergency Management service) then in addition to an Emergency Management Department scrutinising how and why it “arranges” and “organises” those activities identified earlier, the relevant provider department (the Direct Labour Organisation and Social Services) would need to scrutinise how and why they “provide” and “deliver” such functions. This issue of customisation of the model for cross-cutting review purposes has been incorporated into the accompanying user guidance notes.

In light of Interviewee Six's experience of operational response, the phrase 'provide trauma counselling' was deleted from the activities section of the immediate response activity and replaced with 'organise personal support'. This modification reflects all counselling par se (and including counselling for trauma) is a longer-term rather than an immediate issue. Ultimately, Interviewee Five perceived a local authority will be judged by the public and external organisations on its response to an emergency which can either be in a positive way leading to an improved reputation or in a negative way resulting in a diminished reputation. Either of these outcomes could affect the overall credibility of a local authority and for this reason the author has included the term 'improved or diminished reputation of council' in the outcomes section of the immediate response activity.

The final aspect of this tier to be amended was that of long-term recovery. To reflect the earlier deletion of 'trauma counselling' from immediate response, the term 'organise long-term personal support' was incorporated as an activity. This change was to reflect Interviewee Six's experience that counselling is provided in the longer-term as a welfare issue. Finally, the author reworded several activities to reflect the role of the Emergency Management service is to arrange/organise/assist with functions while the individual service departments provide the actual function. For example, 'organise long-term accommodation', 'organise specialist repair works or demolition' and 'assist with restoration of environment'.

<u>Modifications Made To Post-Incident Part Of Top-Tier:</u>	
Immediate Response:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-sequencing of ‘set up Crisis Management Team’ and ‘support for emergency services’;</li> <li>• Incorporate new terminology;</li> <li>• Activities reworded to reflect role of Emergency Management service and not other local authority service departments;</li> <li>• Deleted reference to ‘trauma counselling’ and replaced with more realistic ‘organise personal support’;</li> <li>• Outcomes reflect that local authority reputation can be improved or diminished depending upon response to emergency.</li> </ul>
Long-term Recovery:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporated ‘organise long-term personal support’ to reflect victims need for counselling;</li> <li>• Activities reworded to reflect role of Emergency Management service and not other local authority service departments.</li> </ul>

Table 8.9.: Modifications Made To Post-Incident Part Of Top-Tier

### Modifying The Middle-Tier – Applying Best Value Generically To The Local Authority Emergency Management Service

The interim findings were used to improve this tier of the model in a number of ways. It was essential that this tier reflected the ethos that Best Value is about continuous improvement as suggested by Interviewee Four. The author reflected this suggestion by incorporating a box to the right of the diagram the same size as the Emergency Management process box on the left hand side. This new box was entitled ‘Outcomes, future strategy and on-going monitoring to achieve Continuous Improvement’. Arrows were placed after each ‘complete’ box leading to the new box in order to show a Best Value Review must result in actions improving the Emergency Management service on a continual basis. In addition, the guidance notes accompanying the model were

strengthened to assist Review teams with the aim of service improvement on an on-going basis by recommending the model be referenced continually during the Review and that, to ensure compliance with Best Value legislation, all questions must be investigated. To counteract the concerns of several interviewees that the valuable information in this tier could become lost in the text, the author has performed several amendments. It has been made more user friendly by reducing the amount of text and strengthening cross-referencing with the appropriate diagrams in the bottom-tier. For example, when applying ‘challenge’ to the managerial aspect of the service the middle-tier of the prototype tells the reader to “challenge how and why you provide the service” and then instructs the reader to “refer to Diagram 1” in the bottom-tier. This process allows the reader to be initially introduced to each Best Value issue in general terms referring to the bottom-tier where the specific questions that need to be answered in order to fulfil the Best Value process comprehensively.

Modifications Made To Middle-tier Of Prototype:

- Incorporated explicit reference to continuous improvement;
- Reduced amount of text without detracting from the individual questions asked within the tier;
- Strengthened cross-referencing between this tier and explanatory diagrams in bottom-tier.

Table 8.10.: Modifications Made To Middle-tier Of Prototype

### Modifying The Bottom-Tier – Applying Best Value To The Specific Components Of The Local Authority Emergency Management Service:

Once the first two tiers of the model had been modified, focus turned to the suite of explanatory diagrams contained within the bottom-tier of the prototype. Each diagram will now be discussed individually.

#### Diagram 1 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Managerial Process Of Emergency Management:

##### C1: Challenge:

The question “Who has overall responsibility for delivering the Emergency Management service?” was posed in the support model evaluated by Interviewees. When reflecting upon all evaluation findings from the six interviewees, the author believed this question should be re-worded to read “Who has overall responsibility for delivering the Emergency Management service and what is the rationale for this?”. As a result of this modification, Best Value Review teams will now also need to consider why Emergency Management responsibility rests where it does within the authority or can alternative locations within the authority be identified?

## C2: Compare:

Three of the five questions in this part of the diagram have been modified, and by accounting for the interviewees input, the author believes have been strengthened. Firstly, the original question “Which organisations should a local authority compare with?” has been amended to read “Which organisations could a local authority compare with and why?”. The author hopes this change will result in Review teams identifying as many possible organisations with whom to compare as possible and them giving careful consideration (in order to provide Best Value Inspectors with a justification for their actions) as why these organisations have been chosen and others ignored. The second question to be modified was “What aspects of the Emergency Management service should be compared?”. This question now reads “What aspects of the Emergency Management service could be compared and how?”. As with the previous modification, the author considers this new amended question will encourage Review teams to be more innovative in how they compare their services whilst at the same time providing a clear justification and approach for doing so. Several interviewees commented in order to achieve Best Value, it should be more than just a number gathering exercise and should result in improvements being made to the actual service. The author believes to reflect the concerns of interviewees, the actual content of plans should be compared and not just the number and type. For this reason, the original question of “How does the local authority’s range of Emergency Plans compare with those of other local authorities in terms of number and type?” has been revised to read “How does the local authority’s

range of Emergency Plans compare with those of other local authorities in terms of number, type and content?”.

### C3: Consult:

In the ‘consult’ aspect of this diagram, the question “Does the local authority consult with external stakeholders about what the entire package of the Emergency Management service is?” has been re-worded to read “To what extent and how does the local authority consult with external stakeholders regarding the work of the Emergency Management service?”. The author considers this slight revision ensures two outcomes. First, Review teams clearly appreciate external stakeholders must have an input into what an Emergency Management service comprises of and not just be informed as to what the service is about. Secondly, Review teams must also agree the extent of its consultation activities with external stakeholders as well as deciding upon the most effective approach for them to adopt. As with previous modifications, it is felt these changes will help to stimulate debate between Review team members and provide evidence in the form of a detailed narrative that can be shown to Best Value Inspectors. Similarly, the question “Does the local authority consult with the public about what the entire package of the Emergency Management service is?” has now changed to read “To what extent and how does the local authority consult with the public regarding the work of the Emergency Management service?”.

#### C4: Compete:

To avoid a 'yes' or 'no' response and to provide the desired detailed narrative, the question "Does the local authority use external 'consultants' when deciding how best to deliver the Emergency Management service?" is now presented as "To what extent and how does the local authority use external 'consultants' when determining the way to deliver the Emergency Management service?". This change clarifies the purpose of this question and now requires Review teams to carefully consider the use of consultants in the service's provision. The question "What methods of service delivery have been considered?" has been extended to now read "What methods of service delivery have been considered and selected/rejected?". As with several previous changes, the author considers Review teams fully answering this question will be in a strong position to justify to Best Value Inspectors why the chosen method of service delivery has been selected in favour of other possible approaches. To ensure Review teams fully consider the possible use of external agencies in service delivery, the question "Are there any external agencies that are able to deliver all or part of the Emergency Management service?" has been entirely reworded to read "What attempts have been made to identify external agencies that could deliver all or part of the service?". The author feels this question reflects several interviewees comments that in-line with the statutory duty of Best Value maintaining the service's existing status quo is not an option for consideration.

Table 8.11. presents an overview of the modifications made to Diagram 1.



<u>Modifications To Diagram 1:</u>	
<b>Challenge:</b>	
<b>Modification:</b>	
The question “Who has overall responsibility for delivering the service?” now reads “Who has overall responsibility for delivering the service and what is the rationale for this?”	
<b>Compare:</b>	
<b>Modification:</b>	
The question “Which organisations should you compare with?” now reads “Which organisations could you compare with and why?”	
The question “Which aspects of the service should be compared?” now reads “What aspects of the service could be compared and how?”	
The question “How does your range of Emergency Plans compare with those of other local authorities in terms of number and type?” now reads “How does your range of Emergency Plans compare with those of other local authorities in terms of number, type and content?”	
<b>Compete:</b>	
<b>Modification:</b>	
The question “Did you use external ‘consultants’ when deciding how best to deliver the service?” now reads “To what extent and how does the local authority use external ‘consultants’ when determining the way to deliver the Emergency Management service?”	
The question “What methods of service delivery have you considered?” now reads “What methods of service delivery have been considered and selected/rejected?”	
The question “Are there any external agencies able to deliver all or part of the service?” now reads “What attempts have been made to identify external agencies that could deliver all or part of the service?”	
<b>Consult:</b>	
<b>Modification:</b>	
The question “Do you consult with external stakeholders about what the entire package of the emergency management service is?” now reads “To what extent and how does the local authority consult with external stakeholders regarding the work of the Emergency Management service?”	
The question “Do you consult with the public about what the entire package of the emergency management service is?” now reads “To what extent and how does the local authority consult with the public regarding the work of the Emergency Management service?”	

Table 8.11.: Modifications To Diagram 1

## Diagram 2 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Planning Process Of Emergency Management:

### C1: Challenge:

To avoid obtaining 'yes' or 'no' responses, and to ensure active discussion takes place between Review team members, the question "Does the local authority have a defined planning process" has been modified to read "What is the local authority's defined planning process?". This new question will ensure the defined planning process is fundamentally challenged. To assist the flow of a Review team's discussion, the author decided to re-sequence four of the questions asked in the original support model. The ordering of the constituent questions is now "What is the perception of an Emergency Plan?", "What factors influence the type of plans written?", "What type of Emergency Plans are produced?" and "Why does the local authority produce the plans that it has?". Whilst none of the interviewees expressed any concerns about the question "Do Emergency Plans cover all the risks within the local authority's area?", the author believed this issue may be dismissed with a 'yes' or 'no' response without any real discussion. For this reason, it has been amended to now read "To what extent are risks within your local authority's area planned for?". The Best Value Review support model evaluated at this stage of the research contained the question "Are quality standards applied to Emergency Plans?". In retrospect, the author believed this question did not provide any requirement for a Review team to re-think how and why quality standards were applied to Emergency Plans. As a result of this, the question has now been

modified to ask “To what extent and how are quality standards applied to Emergency Plans?”, so model users must give greater thought to their use of quality standards. The final question of this particular aspect of the diagram was “Are 24 hour notification systems adequate?” and could also result in a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response. For this reason, it has been re-phrased to read “How is the adequacy of 24 hour notification systems ensured?”.

C2: Compare:

No modifications were made to this aspect of the explanatory diagram as all interviewees were supportive of the questions asked.

C3: Consult:

Two minor changes were made to questions contained in this part of the diagram to ensure the removal of any ambiguity. The question “How are these organisations consulted during planning?” has been re-worded to “How are partner organisations consulted during planning?”. Similarly, the question “How does the local authority consult with the public during planning?” has been re-phrased to read “How are the public consulted during planning?”. The author considered these minor changes made the questions asked easier to understand.

## C4: Compete:

The two questions housed in this part of the diagram began with the instruction “Who else could ...”. However, the author has sought to clarify these questions by re-phrasing them to read “Which other organisation(s) could write Emergency Plans on behalf of the local authority and how?” and “Which other organisation(s) could provide 24 hour notification systems on behalf of the local authority and how?”. These changes reflect Interviewee Five’s concerns that outsourcing should only occur if the quality of the service improves. A new question has been incorporated into this aspect of the model to reflect Interviewee Five’s view there are opportunities to be gained from Best Value as existing services could be offered to new customers and alternative work can be undertaken to counter falling values of central government grant (“How can the service be marketed to potential new customers?”). Table 8.12. gives an overview of the modifications made to this Diagram.

<u>Modifications To Diagram 2:</u>	
<u>Challenge:</u>	
<u>Modification:</u>	
The question “Do you have a defined planning process?” has been reworded to read “What is the local authority’s defined planning process?”	
The question “Do your Emergency Plans cover all the risks in your area?” has been reworded to read “To what extent are risks within your local authority’s area planned for?”	
The question “Are quality standards applied to your Emergency Plans?” has been reworded to read “To what extent and how are quality standards applied to Emergency Plans?”	
The question “Are your 24 hour notification systems adequate?” has been reworded to read “How is the adequacy of 24 hour notification systems ensured?”	

Several questions were resequenced in order to ensure a more logical flow of questioning.
<u>Consult:</u>
<u>Modification:</u>
The question “How are these organisations consulted during planning?” has been reworded to read “How are partner organisations consulted during planning?”
The question “How does the local authority consult with the public during planning?” has been reworded to read “How are the public consulted during planning?”
<u>Compete:</u>
<u>Modification:</u>
The question “Who else could write your Emergency Plans?” has been reworded to read “Which other organisation(s) could write Emergency Plans on behalf of the local authority in a better way and how?”
The question “Who else could provide 24 hour notification systems?” has been reworded to read “Which other organisation(s) could provide 24 hour notification systems on behalf of the local authority in a better way and how?”
A new question “How can the service be marketed to potential new customers?” has been inserted.

Table 8.12.: Modifications To Diagram 2:

### Diagram 3 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Liaison Process Of Emergency Management:

#### C1: Challenge:

The original question “How does a local authority consult with its stakeholders during the liaison process?” has been re-phrased so model users can appreciate there are many different service ‘stakeholders’ both within and outside of the local authority. For example, the term ‘internal stakeholder’ encompasses local authority officers, Elected Members and Emergency Management professionals whilst ‘external stakeholders’

include organisations such as the emergency services, the utilities, the voluntary sector and health organisations. For this reason, the question has been revised to read “How does a local authority consult with internal and external stakeholders during the liaison process?”.

C2: Compare:

No modifications were suggested by interviewees in relation to this aspect of the Diagram.

C3: Consult:

Two questions in this diagram were revised following the prototype’s evaluation. The first question “Are formal liaison arrangements in place for all partner organisations?” could elicit a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response with no requirement for Review team discussion. For this reason, the question was revised to read “What formal liaison arrangements are in place for all partner organisations?”. Similarly, the original question “Is there a formal multi-agency liaison framework in existence?” has been re-phrased to “What formal multi-agency liaison framework is in existence?”.

## C4: Compete:

The author considered the question “Are there any external agencies that can provide the liaison forum(s)?” should be strengthened to reflect local authorities must consider the use of external organisations in providing local authority services. This question was therefore re-phrased to read “To what extent could other organisation(s) assist in performing liaison activities in either whole or part in a better way and how?”. This new question requires Review teams to identify other organisations that could provide the necessary activities and then determine how their assistance could be utilised. This revised question also reflects interviewees concerns that outsourcing should only occur when there is evidence the service will improve as a result. The modifications made to this Diagram are summarised in Table 8.13.

<u>Modifications To Diagram 3:</u>	
<u>Challenge:</u>	
Modification:	
The question “How does a local authority consult with its stakeholders during the liaison process” has been reworded to read “How does a local authority consult with internal and external stakeholders during the liaison process?”	
<u>Consult:</u>	
Modification:	
The question “Are formal liaison arrangements in place for all partner organisations?” has been reworded to read “What formal liaison arrangements are in place for all partner organisations?”	
The question “Is there a formal multi-agency liaison framework in existence?” has been reworded to read “What formal multi-agency liaison framework is in existence?”	

Compete:
Modification:
The question “Are there any external agencies which can provide the liaison forum(s)?” has been reworded to read “To what extent could other organisation(s) assist in performing liaison activities in either whole or part in a better way and how?”

Table 8.13.: Modifications To Diagram 3:

#### Diagram 4 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Training Process Of Emergency Management:

##### C1: Challenge:

As a result of the support model’s evaluation, a number of the interviewees commented the explanatory diagrams of the bottom-tier contained valuable information that would have assisted them in achieving a more thorough and robust Best Value Review of their service. For this reason, the author was determined to ensure all these questions were as strong and thought provoking as possible. The original question “Do all staff named in Emergency Plans receive formal training?” would have elicited a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response, therefore the question has been strengthened to now ask “To what extent and how do all staff named in Emergency Plans receive formal training?”. Similarly, the question “Are quality standards applied to Emergency Management training processes?” now asks “To what extent and how are quality standards applied to Emergency Management training processes?”. The question “Are lessons learnt from Emergency Management training incorporated back into the planning process?” was asked in the original model but the author felt by re-wording it to read “How are lessons learnt from Emergency



Management training incorporated back into the planning process?” Review teams would then have to fundamentally question the processes they currently use. The final two questions in the model; “Do personnel (both local authority and non-local authority) not named in Emergency Plans receive training?” and “Is there a formal Emergency Management training strategy developed within the local authority?” (evaluated with interviewees would have elicited ‘yes’ or ‘no’ responses). To ensure Review teams give serious consideration to these aspects of the training activity, the questions are now phrased as “To what extent and how do personnel (both local authority and non-local authority) not named in Emergency Plans receive training?” and “How are formal Emergency Management training strategies developed within the local authority?”.

#### C2: Compare:

No modifications were suggested to this aspect of the explanatory diagram, as interviewees considered the questions asked did relate the ‘compare’ requirement of Best Value to the training process of Emergency Management.

#### C3: Consult:

The purpose of the three questions contained in this part of the diagram (“Are Emergency Management training strategies agreed between the local authority and the service provider?”, “Are Emergency Management training activities assessed for effectiveness and if so, how?” and “Do personnel named in Emergency Plans have their training needs

discussed with them?") aimed to determine whether a local authority's Emergency Management training activities are appropriate for meeting the needs of stakeholders. However, on reflection these questions may only provide limited responses because they can potentially result in 'yes' or 'no' responses. To ensure the questions obtain a detailed narrative response upon which to make such a judgement, they have been re-worded to read "How are Emergency Management training strategies agreed between the local authority and the service providers?", "How are Emergency Management training activities assessed for effectiveness?" and "How do personnel named in Emergency Plans have their training needs identified?". A further modification was made to this final question to reflect Interviewee Five's belief for Emergency Management to be provided as effectively as possible, then the Emergency Management professionals delivering the service should be trained to the highest possible standard in order they remain totally up-to-date with new skills and developments to ensure the service incorporates new techniques and lessons learnt by others following their responses to emergencies and so it now reads "How do personnel named in Emergency Plans have their training needs identified?".

#### C4: Compete:

The original questions of "Are there any external agencies that can deliver the overall Emergency Management training strategy?" and "Are there any external agencies that can deliver part of the Emergency Management training strategy?" have been modified to ensure Review teams investigate the possibility of external organisations playing a part in

the delivery of Emergency Management training activities to read “Which other organisations could deliver the overall Emergency Management training strategy and how?” and “Which other organisations could deliver part of the Emergency Management training strategy and how?”.

Table 8.14. presents the modifications made to this tier of the model.

<u>Modifications To Diagram 4:</u>	
<u>Challenge:</u>	
Modification:	
The question “Do all staff named in plans receive formal training?” has been reworded to read “To what extent and how do all staff named in plans receive formal training?”	
The question “Are quality standards applied to training?” has been reworded to read “To what extent and how are quality standards applied to Emergency Management training processes?”	
The question “Are lessons learnt from training incorporated back into the planning process?” has been reworded to read “How are lessons learnt from Emergency Management training incorporate back into the planning process?”	
The question “Do staff not named in plans receive training?” has been reworded to read “To what extent and how do personnel (both local authority and non-local authority) not named in Emergency Plans receive training?”	
The question “Is there a formal training strategy developed in the authority?” has been reworded to read “How are formal Emergency Management training strategies developed within the local authority?”	
<u>Consult:</u>	
Modification:	
The question “Are training strategies agreed between the local authority and the service provider” has been reworded to read “How are Emergency Management training strategies agreed between the local authority and the service provider?”	
The question “Are training activities assessed for effectiveness and how?” has been reworded to read “How are Emergency Management training activities assessed for effectiveness?”	
The question “Do officers named in Emergency Plans have their training needs discussed with them?” has been reworded to read “How do personnel named in Emergency Plans have their training needs identified (including Emergency Management professionals)?”	

Compete:
Modification:
The question “Are there any external agencies that can deliver the overall training strategy” has been reworded to read “Which other organisations could better deliver the overall Emergency Management training strategy and how?”
The question “Are there any external agencies that can deliver part of the training strategy” has been reworded to read “Which other organisations could better deliver part of the Emergency Management training strategy and how?”

Table 8.14.: Modifications To Diagram 4

Diagram 5 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Operational Process Of Emergency Management:

C1: Challenge:

Two questions contained in this part of the diagram (“Is the term ‘emergency’ defined within the local authority?” and “Are the lessons learnt from responding to an emergency incorporated back into the planning process?”) were both altered so as to ensure Review teams undergo a thorough exploration of their current processes and procedures. They are subsequently presented as “How is the term ‘emergency’ defined within the local authority?” and “How are lessons learnt from responding to an emergency incorporated back into the planning process?”. A new question was added into this diagram asking “What type of emergencies does the local authority not become involved in and why?”. The rationale for including this question is so that Best Value Review teams consider why the local authority does not respond to, or become involved in certain emergencies. Is it, for example, because of historical reasons, lack of resources or a lack of understanding of role? The evaluation process identified Interviewee One believed long-

term recovery strategies should be accounted for in this diagram to reflect the important role local authorities play in ensuring an environment returns to normality after an emergency. For this reason, the question “How are long-term recovery strategies developed?” has been incorporated.

C2: Compare:

The author re-phrased the original question of “How does the speed of the local authority’s response to an emergency compare with other local authorities?” to read “How does the speed and effectiveness of the local authority’s response to an emergency compare with that of other local authorities?”. This change was made to ensure the comparison was not purely based upon the speed of response but also took into consideration the impact of the subsequent response. For example, one local authority may respond in four minutes but their response may not be as effective as another authority who may take longer to initially respond. A new question has been incorporated to reflect the earlier comments of Interviewee One regarding long-term recovery namely “How do long-term recovery strategies compare?”.

C3: Consult:

The original question “What mechanisms are in place for the views and needs of those affected by the emergency in order to give them consideration during the emergency response?” was re-worded to so as to make it clearer for Review team members to understand and subsequently reads as “How are the views and needs of the public

gathered during an emergency to ensure they are considered during response?”.

Similarly, the question “What mechanisms are in place to record the experiences of those involved in the emergency?” was clarified to read “What mechanisms are in place to record the experiences of all those involved in the emergency (i.e. responders and victims)?”.

C4: Compete:

The questions “Are there any external agencies that can better deliver the overall response on behalf of the local authority?” and “Are there any external agencies that can better deliver part of the response on behalf of the local authority?” were revised and strengthened following the evaluation process to ensure Review teams thoroughly investigated the extent to which other organisations could be used in future delivery of the Emergency Management service. The revised questions now read “Which other organisation(s) can deliver the overall response on behalf of the local authority and how?” and “Which other organisation(s) can deliver part of the response on behalf of the local authority and how?”.

#### Modifications To Diagram 5:

##### Challenge:

##### Modifications:

The question “Is the term ‘emergency’ defined in your authority?” has been reworded to read “How is the term ‘emergency’ defined in your local authority?”

The question “What type of emergencies does the local authority become involved in?” has been reworded to read “What type of emergency does the local authority become involved in and why?”

A new question of “What type of emergency does the local authority not become involved in and why?” has been inserted

A new question of “How are long-term recovery strategies developed?” has been inserted
<b>Compare:</b>
<b>Modifications:</b>
The question “How does the speed of your response to an emergency compare with other local authorities” has been reworded to read “How does the speed and effectiveness of the local authority’s response to an emergency compare with that of other local authorities?”
The question “How do your arrangements for the public being able to access emergency aid compare with those of other local authorities?” has been reworded to read “How does the local authority’s arrangements for the public being able to access emergency aid compare with those of other local authorities?”
A new question of “How do long-term recovery strategies compare?” has been inserted
<b>Consult:</b>
<b>Modification:</b>
The question “Are consultation mechanisms with partner organisations assessed for effectiveness and how?” has been reworded to read “How are consultation mechanisms with partner organisations assessed for effectiveness?”
The question “Are consultation mechanisms for the public assessed for effectiveness and how?” has been reworded to read “How are consultation mechanisms for the public assessed for effectiveness?”
The question “What mechanisms are in place to record the experiences of those involved in the emergency?” has been reworded to read “What mechanisms are in place to record the experiences of all those involved in the emergency (i.e. responders and victims)?”
<b>Compete:</b>
<b>Modification:</b>
The question “Are there any external agencies that can deliver the overall local authority response?” has been reworded to read “Which other organisation(s) can better deliver the overall response on behalf of the local authority and how?”
The question “Are there any external agencies that can deliver part of the local authority response?” has been reworded to read “Which other organisation(s) can better deliver part of the response on behalf of the local authority and how?”

Table 8.15.: Modifications To Diagram 5

The Revised Best Value Review Support Model – A Critique:

As a direct result of the initial evaluation process, all tiers of the support model have been amended and arguably strengthened. Several of the recommendations for model improvement were suggested solely by Interviewee Six. The author is keen to stress that rather than the model being improved based upon the perceptions of a minority respondent, Interviewee Six was unique when compared to the other interviewees as he had experienced a full Best Value Inspectorate inspection. For this reason, many of Interviewee Six's comments provided greater in-sight into the Best Value inspection process and were therefore incorporated where possible into the model.

It is important to now consider the model in terms of the Emergency Management stakeholders' perceived top five benefits of applying Best Value principles to the service as well as the top five perceived constraints (as presented in Chapter Six).

During the survey of Emergency Management stakeholders, it was seen that their perceived top five potential benefits of applying Best Value to the service were 'improving the quality of the service', 'developing partnerships', 'providing a service that responds to public needs', 'the opportunity for continuous improvement' and 'raising the professionalism of the service'. These desired benefits were considered very carefully throughout the development of the model to ensure they were incorporated as best as possible. Now the model has been developed and modified, it is appropriate to re-consider these once again in order to ensure they have (where possible) been included.



Stakeholders hoped Best Value would result in the quality of the Emergency Management service improving. The support model was recognised by interviewees as providing a tool that if implemented fully would mean a thorough Best Value Review of an Emergency Management service was undertaken and, if the findings of the Review are acted upon, will result in an improved service.

Another perceived benefit was the development of partnerships in Emergency Management service delivery. This issue was incorporated generically into the middle-tier of the model and then specifically into the diagrams contained in the bottom-tier of the model. For example, in the middle-tier of the model the statement “determine the competitiveness of the service in its operational phase (refer to Diagram 5)” is stated when the Best Value principle of ‘compete’ is applied to the ‘operational’ activity of the service. The appropriate part of Diagram 5 then instructs the reader to consider “Are there any external agencies that can deliver part of the local authority response in a better way?”. The model identifies areas of potential partnership working in all parts of the Emergency Management service thereby ensuring if Best Value Review teams use this model they will have to investigate the questions asked. This is very important when considering not only have stakeholders indicated they would like to see the service delivered through greater utilisation of partnerships but that central government would like to see all local authority services being delivered through appropriate partnership working methods. Similarly, one of the central government’s main arguments for introducing Best Value was to ensure local authority services delivered meet the needs of the public. Stakeholders who responded to the census highlighted they hoped Best Value

would result in them providing an Emergency Management service that responds to public needs. For this reason, the model incorporates a series of questions which if considered by Best Value Review teams will allow them to diagnose the current effectiveness of their service in meeting the needs of the public.

The issue of public consultation was built into the final two tiers of the support model, clearly highlighting to Review team members at what points in the process the public should be considered and how. However, it is important to stress the model took this perceived benefit further by considering not only the needs of the public, but also those of the service's internal and external stakeholders. For example, the reader is instructed in the middle-tier of the model when applying 'consult' to the 'managerial' activity of the service to "consult to determine how effective the service is perceived to be provided (refer to Diagram 1)". This issue is then expanded upon in the bottom-tier of the model when readers are asked to investigate "Do you consult with external stakeholders about the nature of the entire package of the Emergency Management service?". Similar questions are asked looking at and challenging current arrangements for internal stakeholders and the public.

The stakeholders who participated in the census hoped Best Value would provide the opportunity for continuous improvement in the service. Following the support model's evaluation process, the linkage between Best Value and continuous improvement has been strengthened in the middle-tier with a clear reference that Best Value Review outcomes should form part of the service's future strategy and on-going monitoring. The

model, particularly the bottom-tier, presents questions that if considered and investigated by Review teams, will result in the production of evidence upon which appropriate areas for future improvement can be identified.

Finally, stakeholders clearly stated they hoped Best Value would result in the professionalism of the service being raised. All of the interviewees who participated in the evaluation expressed their overwhelming support of the model. The main reasons cited for this support was that the model clearly defines, for the first time, the true remit of the Emergency Management service and goes on to detail how all service aspects can be thoroughly investigated during a Best Value Review. Indeed, the majority of the interviewees acknowledged their own Emergency Management Best Value Reviews had not considered all service activities (e.g. Interviewee One's Review did not cover the operational activities of the service) nor had they been able to robustly apply each of the 'Cs' (e.g. Interviewee Four acknowledged his Review was lacking in relation to the public consultation and the use of competition). All interviewees also acknowledged the model highlights, and asks questions in relation to, the many difficult issues surrounding the implementation of Best Value in the service. Providing the model is used correctly and all questions are thoroughly investigated, then a Review team will be able to make an assessment of those areas of a service that need to improve. Whilst the model will assist in flagging current limitations within Emergency Management services, it will not provide the answers to these issues. However, the model will assist Review teams in those areas of service provision where measurement is proving to be problematic due to the current lack of quality standards. In order to raise the professionalism of the service a

local authority must ensure remedial work does occur in relation to those diagnosed areas of concern.

The Emergency Management stakeholders also identified their top five perceived constraints to successfully adopting Best Value in the Emergency Management service, ‘lack of national quality standards’, ‘decreasing civil defence grant’, ‘lack of service legislation’, ‘lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Management Officers’, ‘inconsistent working boundaries and lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public’. The perceived constraints were also considered throughout the model development process and it is now important to discuss how the final support model attempts to overcome these constraints.

It was recognised early on in this research no specific national performance indicators exist for local authority Emergency Management. The author acknowledges that the ‘compare’ aspect of Best Value would be arguably much easier for local authorities to undertake if such national indicators did exist. However, even though performance indicators do not yet exist, Review teams must still comply with the ‘compare’ criteria of Best Value. The middle and bottom-tiers of the model were devised so as to guide local authorities as to how they could compare as best or as practically as possible without these benchmarks being (yet) in place. The middle-tier applies ‘compare’ principles generally to all aspects of the service and then goes in to much greater detail in the bottom-tier as to how this can actually be achieved. For example, the middle-tier applies Best Value’s comparison principles to the ‘planning’ activity of the Emergency

Management service by instructing readers to “Question how emergency plans and arrangements compare with those of other organisations (refer to Diagram 2)”. Diagram 2 in the bottom-tier of the model then recommends Best Value Review team members investigate areas including ‘How do your Emergency Plans compare with those of other local authorities?’, ‘How do your Emergency Plans compare with those other responding agencies?’, ‘How do you 24-hour notification systems compare to those of other local authorities?’. The author acknowledges for this support model to realistically overcome the lack of national standards and performance indicators, and assist local authorities in comparing their Emergency Management services, it requires co-ordination at a higher level than local authorities to ensure there is mandatory compliance with the model. Such an approach would result in the development of compatible data collection mechanisms as well as the sharing of information amongst local authority Emergency Management services.

A lack of, or a decreasing allocation of Civil Defence Grant funding, was viewed by many stakeholders as a constraint to successfully applying Best Value to the service. With this in mind, the model was designed so Review teams working top to bottom through the model will be able to determine how efficiently its current service is provided and identify ways in which it can save money or find alternative sources of funding in the future including the identification of additional work that could be delivered to a new/alternative customer base. For examples, the questions “What methods of service delivery have been considered and selected/rejected” and “How can the service be marketed to potential new customers?” require Review teams to consider the impact of

current funding levels upon service delivery but also to explore potential new markets where income generation can be sought.

Lack of legislation specific to the Emergency Management service was perceived to be another major constraint. In the absence of any such legislation, the top-tier of this model has aimed to fill this information void by clearly identifying the full remit of the service including the often overlooked operations phase. All follow-up interviewees believed the top-tier of the model successfully achieved its aim of defining the true scope of the Emergency Management service. However, the author acknowledges this model, despite it being recognised as an accurate portrayal of a local authority Emergency Management service, cannot assist local authorities in overcoming the inherent difficulties of the current lack of statutory duty as discussed in Chapter Three.

In addition, another perceived constraint to the success of any Review process was considered to be the lack of understanding held by Emergency Management professionals of the Best Value process. The middle and bottom-tiers of the support model have been designed to overcome this constraint by firstly applying Best Value principles generically to the service then clearly cross-referencing to the specific questions that must be investigated (referencing from the middle to the bottom-tier diagrams).

Inconsistent working boundaries were thought of as being another potential constraint to achieving a successful Best Value Review of the service. The stakeholder census had revealed that the Emergency Management service was currently delivered inconsistently

across the UK with many different working boundaries being used as the basis for service delivery. It was recognised early on in the model's development that it would not be feasible to design a model based upon the type of working boundaries used. Instead, it was considered more important to focus upon identify the issues all local authorities must investigate, regardless of the working boundaries they use, when subjecting their Emergency Management service to a Review. Under Best Value, all local authority activities must be reviewed and challenged. As discussed earlier in this study, all local authorities have the potential to experience an emergency in their area and regardless of their working boundaries, therefore all local authorities must challenge their Emergency Management procedures. Once the issues had been identified a model was designed that was of a flexible nature so local authorities could take it and then apply it to their own local circumstances. Questions were devised which could be answered by any local authority regardless of the boundaries it worked towards. For example, in order to comprehensively 'challenge' the operational aspect of an Emergency Management service Single Tier and Two Tier local authority Best Value Review teams must equally consider those questions identified in Diagram 5 of the bottom-tier of the support model including "How is the term 'emergency' defined in your authority?" and "How does the local authority manage emergencies?". By asking the same questions to each type of local authority regardless of their boundaries ensures no area of service delivery is overlooked during a Best Value Review. Regardless of a local authority's beliefs as to what Emergency Management responsibilities it has and does not have a Review team should investigate all of the questions asked within the model. For example, whilst a Two Tier local authority could hold the opinion that as it does not receive Grant funding

directly from central government, it therefore does not have any responsibility for an Emergency Management service. However, such a local authority would acknowledge it would be expected to assist their community in the event of an emergency directly impacting upon them. For this reason, it is just as important for a Two Tier local authority to review how such help would be provided to the local community as it would be for a direct grant receiving authority. In addition to questions being devised that ensure all types of local authority scrutinise their existing arrangements for providing an Emergency Management service, the guidance notes accompanying the support model were developed to encourage Reviews covering Emergency Management provision within a Two Tier structure to have as wide a membership as possible to ensure all stakeholder perceptions were considered. For example, that County Council and District Council personnel have an input into such a Review thereby ensuring that their differing perceptions and concerns are equally considered. The six follow-up interviewees all represented differing types of working boundaries and working practices and all considered the model was capable of being applied to their own individual circumstances.

The final potential constraint identified was the publics' lack of understanding of the Emergency Management service. The final two tiers of the model were designed to incorporate amongst other things the need for public involvement in a Best Value Review. Prior to their Best Value Reviews taking place, each of the follow-up interviewees acknowledged they had differing levels of interface with the public regarding Emergency Management. However, all felt they would have been able to use the support model by applying it to their own local circumstances. Indeed, as discussed



earlier in this chapter, all interviewees believed that had the model been used within their own recent Emergency Management Best Value Review then a more robust Review could have taken place as all areas, including consultation with the public and the use of competition within the delivery of the service, are highlighted. The author is keen to stress whilst interviewees believed the model would have resulted in a more robust Best Value Review, this would only have been achieved if the Review teams in question had proactively investigated each question and did not chose to ignore or overlook a particular question(s). These concerns will be incorporated into the guidance notes that accompany the support model.

### **Best Value Review Support Model Evaluation Stage 2:**

Stage one of the model's evaluation represented an interim evaluation, undertaken in order to gauge the views of a number of stakeholders with first-hand experience of implementing an Emergency Management Best Value Review. This process also facilitated triangulation of the findings obtained from the Emergency Management stakeholder census earlier in this research study. This initial evaluation allowed the author to revise the model so it reflected those experiences held by several stakeholders as a result of implementing an Emergency Management Best Value Review in the first year of Best Value becoming a statutory duty. Once these revisions had been implemented, the author was then able to identify ways in which a second, more rigorous evaluation could be undertaken, focussing in greater detail upon the model's ability to be implemented by a local authority regardless of the status of their Emergency

Management service's funding, legislative responsibility, performance measurement, organisation and culture and also level of public awareness which were key drivers of stakeholder perception regarding implementation of Best Value that were identified in Chapter Six. Two approaches for such an evaluation process were considered. First, to pilot the model with a local authority conducting an actual Emergency Management Best Value Review and secondly, to issue a questionnaire seeking the individual views of members of the E.P.S.'s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group regarding the support model and its intended purpose.

Ideally, the first option, a form of action research, would have been the author's favoured choice as it would have provided a real-life indication of how implementable the support model would be in an actual Review setting and would have allowed for the identification of workplace problems that could affect the model's effectiveness (Abraham, 1997).

From these observations, it would then have been possible to attempt to seek appropriate solutions (Hult and Lennung, 1980). However, this option was not feasible for several reasons. Due to the time and resource constraints facing local authorities when conducting Best Value Reviews, where a typical Best Value Review lasts for nine months with resources often being shared between on-going service delivery and the live Review, the author considered it was unlikely any authority would be in a position to be able to volunteer to implement this model on a trial basis. The second reason was due to increased terrorist awareness post-11 September, the author's work commitments as an Emergency Management practitioner did not allow the required amount of time needed outside the employing authority in order to facilitate such an implementation process.

Whilst this approach would have resulted in an in-depth understanding of how a local authority would implement such a support model and identify the difficulties it would face in doing so, this approach in isolation would not have elicited the perceptions of a wide selection of stakeholders from mainland U.K. Emergency Management provision. For these reasons, this option was not considered any further.

The author was keen to ensure the second stage of the evaluation process sought to elicit the views of Emergency Management professionals representing both Single-Tier and Two-Tier local authorities within all geographical locations covered by this research. As many of the questions which needed to be asked during this second stage of the evaluation process were of a specific nature, and as the responses would require an understanding of local authority Emergency Management, the author decided to approach the E.P.S.'s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group. This Group comprised of practicing Emergency Management professionals representing all types of local authority in range of geographical locations (Table 5.12.). Equally important was the fact one of this Group's terms of reference was to *"identify good practice and support innovation wherever it is found and promote examples of these amongst Emergency Planning practitioners and produce guidance for the profession as necessary"* ([www.emergplansoc](http://www.emergplansoc), 2002). The author considered individual members of the Group would consider the Best Value Review support model in detail before making a judgement which could ultimately influence the actions of other members of the Society. This option was selected and as detailed in Chapter Five a questionnaire was

subsequently devised and issued to Professional Issues Group members. Eleven completed questionnaires were returned as shown in Table 5.14..

#### Evaluation Findings:

Questions contained within the questionnaire were grouped into six themes as follows; potential constraints for Emergency Management Best Value Reviews, potential benefits of Emergency Management Best Value Reviews, application of 'Cs', issues influencing current and future Emergency Management delivery, potential implementation of prototype and perceived strengths and limitations of the model. These six themes ensured the model was evaluated in terms of its structure, substantive content as well as its potential practical application. The rationale for each question asked within the six grouping themes above has already been discussed at length in Chapter Five. The remainder of this chapter will focus upon the responses obtained to these questions.

#### Potential Constraints For Emergency Management Best Value Reviews:

Stakeholders were asked to indicate to what extent, if at all, they believed the model could help a Review team overcome the six constraints identified during the earlier census when implementing Best Value within their Emergency Management service namely:

- Lack of national quality standards for Emergency Management;
- Decreasing Civil Defence Grant;
- Lack of Emergency Management legislation;

- Lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Management officers;
- Inconsistent working boundaries;
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public.

#### Lack Of National Quality Standards For Emergency Management

All stakeholders were asked to consider to what extent the support model could help an Emergency Management Best Value Review team to overcome the current lack of national standards within the service. Six out of the eleven responding stakeholders believed the model would assist Emergency Management Best Value Review teams in overcoming the constraining lack of national quality standards. Indeed, stakeholders representing English Two Tier Civil Defence Grant receiving authorities made the following comments:

- *The model will force local authorities to look at the service(s) they provide in comparison with others and therefore hopefully help set standards and lead to improvements in authorities who do not give Emergency Management the focus that it ought to have;*
- *This model will help review teams to properly analyse the existing poor standards and should prompt them to devise their own;*
- *I consider this prototype (model) gives clarity to Emergency Management.*

Four other stakeholders considered this model would go some way to assisting Review Teams in overcoming the problems associated with the current lack of national standards.

For example, one stakeholder representing an English Two Tier authority that did not receive Civil Defence Grant cited *“The model will help, but the real problem lies in central government not taking responsibility, rather than any local government shortcoming”* whilst a stakeholder representing a non-grant receiving Scottish Unitary felt the model would help in part because it *“establishes a sound basis for the development of standards by identifying the key elements for Emergency Management”*.

In contrast, one English Single Tier respondent did not believe the support model would help an Emergency Management Best Value Review team to overcome the lack of national standards, however, this respondent did not explain why they held this opinion. When considering the view of this English Single Tier respondent, the author is keen to stress the aim of the model is to provide a diagnosis of current Emergency Management performance as it can be used to both identify current strengths or limitations in either the effectiveness of a local authority’s systems or the inability to effectively review the Emergency Management service due to a lack of support mechanisms.

These findings show the majority of stakeholders who participated in this evaluation exercise considered the model would, if not entirely overcome, go someway to overcoming the current lack of national Emergency Management quality standards. In light of this finding, the author believes the support model could help to alleviate some of those concerns expressed in the earlier review of literature. Cunningham (March 2002) voiced the concern no performance data was collected nationally as a result of central government appearing not to understand what local authorities do in order to prepare for an emergency. The model evaluation findings suggest not only does it clarify and detail

what activities local authorities undertake before, during and after an emergency but also ensures Best Value Review teams are shown ways in which an Emergency Management service can be compared without having any national indicators. Whilst striving to overcome Cunningham's concern performance data was not gathered on a national basis, the support model was developed so as to guide local authorities in the type of data it could collect in order to compare and assess the current effectiveness of the service delivered. The support for the model suggests it could be utilised by any type of local authority in any geographical location. Ideally, such performance data should be collected on a national basis to avoid Filkin's (June 1999) earlier expressed concern substantial data collection and comparison by individuals at a local level should be avoided. However, as no such data is collected, the findings from evaluation respondents indicated this model could guide Emergency Management Best Value Reviews in collecting performance data upon which to compare services. This is an encouraging finding because if this model were to be adopted on a national basis then performance related data could be collected and shared between local authorities. Local authorities would be collecting the same type of information and therefore be in a position to share information amongst themselves and with local authorities undertaking Emergency Management Best Value Reviews in subsequent years. However, as discussed earlier in this chapter for the support model to be adopted in this way its usage would need co-ordinated at a level central government or regional government level to ensure compliance at local government level.

### Decreasing Civil Defence Grant

As with the previous question, stakeholders were also asked to indicate whether they felt the model would help Best Value Review teams to overcome the issue of decreasing Civil Defence Grant. Five stakeholders believed this model would help Review teams to overcome declining grant funding. Several stakeholders provided additional comments explaining why they considered this support model would be helpful. For example, one stakeholder representing an English Two Tier authority that received grant stated:

*Most local authorities approach Emergency Management from the viewpoint of how much grant they receive consequently dictates what they can provide as a service. The questions in this model should lead to a reversal of this type of attitude where local authorities consider what level of service they require and then consider the costs and funding issues.*

A further two stakeholders considered the model would only help in part to overcome this potential constraining issue in implementing an effective Emergency Management Best Value Review. For example, a stakeholder from an English Two Tier grant receiving local authority stated *“the model helps analyse (but not decide) every aspect of Emergency Management and will therefore identify how services/functions can be provided at their ‘Best Value’ without cutting back on the quality of service provided”* whilst a stakeholder from an English Two Tier authority not receiving grant believed *“(this was) not an issue for my council, but important nonetheless”*.



However, four of the respondents did not believe the model would allow Review Teams to overcome the impact of declining grant funding. The respondent from the Scottish Unitary commented *“this (issue) can only be progressed by government”* and similarly one stakeholder from an English Two Tier grant receiving authority expressed the view *“at present I do not think there is any linkage between Best Value work at a local level and the (nationally) focussed Civil Defence Grant”*.

Corrigan et al. (1999) argued whilst local authorities have for a considerable number of years believed services could automatically improve if there was to be an increase in the resources available to them, they must now seek to deliver their services in more innovative ways in order to fulfil stakeholder needs. For this reason, the support model was developed to clearly incorporate the ‘compete’ principles of Best Value to ensure Emergency Management Best Value Review teams consider how more effective use of competition can lead to an improved service being delivered, including Emergency Management services identifying new/alternative customers to whom services can be offered. Implementation of this model as part of a Best Value Review will allow local authorities to identify the current ‘symptoms’ associated with Emergency Management service resource levels. Once such issues were identified, it would be the responsibility of Review teams to determine appropriate remedial action to counteract these ‘symptoms’. However, despite respondents acknowledging ‘compete’ has indeed been thoroughly applied to the service (to be discussed later) the majority of such respondents felt the model will either help in part or not help at all in overcoming the declining levels of Grant available to them. This perhaps suggests many Emergency Management

stakeholders believe funding has been reduced too much, to a point where it is not possible to fulfil all stakeholder needs despite the use of competition within a Best Value Review process.

#### Lack of Emergency Management Legislation:

The data analysed from the census identified the current lack of Emergency Management legislation as being another factor that could make it difficult for local authorities to implement Best Value in their services. Stakeholders were asked to consider to what extent the support model developed for this research would assist then in overcoming this constraint. Again, five stakeholders felt the model would help a Review team to implement an effective review despite the current lack of legislation. Stakeholders from English Two Tier grant receiving authorities who believed the model would help commented:

*Emergency Management certainly needs standards and legislation in order to enforce its importance. Emergency Management within local authorities differs throughout the country. Emergency Planning and therefore emergency response capabilities will also vary. In the light of recent emergencies and the increased workload from potential Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (C.B.R.N.) attack, Emergency Planning and preparedness should be of high priority, but yet once more lack of standards/legislation tends to reduce the priority. The model will help to set standards” and “the model should help*

*authorities to circumvent this issue by concentrating minds on identify local needs rather than national duties.*

Three more stakeholders felt the model would go some way towards helping alleviate this potential constraint, e.g. a respondent from an English Two Tier non-grant receiving authority felt *“(as with standards and grant issues discussed earlier) the model will help but the real problem lies in central government not taking responsibility, rather than any local government shortcomings”* while stakeholders from an English Two Tier authority receiving grant held the beliefs *“legislation, properly drafted could be mutually beneficial to Best Value”* and *“this is only part of the equation. Local authorities have got to want to carry out effective Emergency Planning”*.

The remaining three respondents did not believe the model would help to overcome this issue. One stakeholder representing an English Single Tier grant receiving authority said *“out of date legislation does not fit in with what is happening now. It is only legislation that can make us more accountable and automatically standardise Emergency Planning”*. The Scottish Unitary stakeholder who considered *“this can only be progressed by government”*. However, the support model will fulfil its intended purpose as it will allow Review teams to diagnose limitations within the service’s legislative base in a similar way as to the lack of availability of appropriate benchmark data.

Whilst there is currently no statutory duty expressly requiring local authorities to provide an Emergency Management service, there is a wealth of related legislation requiring local

authorities to perform a range of Emergency Management related duties. Many organisations, including the E.P.S. (Ward, November 2002), have been lobbying central government for a number of years to enact a specific Emergency Management statutory duty upon all local authorities. At the time of this research, despite on-going discussions between central government and other relevant organisations (including SoLACE, the L.G.A. and the E.P.S.), there remains no such statutory duty. The earlier review of literature revealed many academics including Quarantelli (1991) and Keller (1988) as well as practitioners (Hoult, December 2000, Vary, 2000, Ward, November 2000) believe that despite the lack of statutory duty, an Emergency Management service is vital. However, Cunningham (March 2002) and Parker (April 1991) believe the current confusion regarding what an Emergency Management service should and should not entail is partly due to the existing legislation. With this in mind, the author developed the support model so as to expressly state the activities to be performed by a local authority in providing an Emergency Management service. It is interesting to note when considering the evaluation findings, stakeholders from English Two Tier local authorities were most supportive for the model in relation to the current lack of specific legislation. This is perhaps explained because as this model defines the activities that should be undertaken to provide an Emergency Management service, perhaps it helps to clarify the existing confusion within the two tier system of local government. However, when considering all the evaluation findings collectively, five stakeholders believed the model would help to overcome the current lack of legislation, three considered it would help in part and another three felt the model would not help at all in overcoming this issue. This suggests to the author whilst the support model will provide local authorities with some

assistance in defining what an Emergency Management service should and should not involve, it is only specific legislation that will ensure such a service is provided effectively.

#### Lack of Understanding Of Best Value By Emergency Management Officers:

The census of Emergency Management stakeholders suggested lack of understanding of Best Value on the part of Emergency Management Officers was another potential constraint upon Review teams being able to undertake an effective Review. Stakeholders were asked to consider whether this model would help to overcome this perceived lack of understanding. Nine of the eleven stakeholders believed this model would help to overcome Emergency Management Officers lack of understanding of Best Value. Many stakeholders made comments to support this perception:

- *The model is very comprehensive and detailed. It is also very easy to understand and follow. The model not only simplifies Best Value but applies it specifically to Emergency Management* (respondent from an English Two Tier grant receiving authority)
- *The model is very clear and concise in placing the Best Value framework and the Emergency Planning framework together. This is not available anywhere else* (stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving authority)
- *It provides the necessary clarity* (stakeholder employed by an English Two Tier grant receiving authority)

- *Model goes a long way to explaining the Best Value process in Emergency Management terms* (respondent from a Scottish Unitary)
- *It will help consistency across the UK but it might be a bit late because many Emergency Planning Units have gone through Best Value* (representative from an English Two Tier grant receiving authority)

One stakeholder considered the support model would only partially assist in helping to overcome this factor commenting “*Emergency Planners tend to think they do not know about Best Value*”. This comment perhaps suggests Emergency Management professionals are choosing not to understand Best Value. Similarly, one other responder believed the model would not help in any way to clarify this lack of understanding as they considered the real issue to be one of reluctance to accept accountability for actions by Emergency Management professionals.

Overall, the majority of stakeholders believed the model would help Emergency Management Officers to overcome their perceived lack of understanding of Best Value. Equally interesting were those comments made by the two stakeholders who believed the model would not help and would only help in part to overcome this perceived lack of understanding. These were interesting because both stakeholders comments related to the issue of accountability. Chapters Three and Four clearly acknowledged the existing lack of central government inspection of local authority Emergency Management services. Indeed, the E.P.S. (October 2001) are keen to see a dedicated national Emergency Management Inspectorate established whose role is to audit and inspect all local authority

Emergency Management activities thereby ensuring such local authority activities are made accountable to an independent body. Whilst accountability in relation to the Emergency Management service has been discussed in Chapters Three and Four, this is, as with the earlier discussed issues of legislation and national quality standards, outside the control and influence of local authorities. This suggests the status of current Emergency Management accountability is not a weakness within the Best Value Review support model but is a limitation within the wider service environment.

#### Inconsistent Working Boundaries:

The fifth identified constraint to Review teams implementing robust Emergency Management Best Value Reviews was the current inconsistency in the working boundaries used throughout the U.K.. Once again stakeholders were asked to indicate to what extent they considered the model was able to address this issue. Eight of the eleven stakeholders felt the model would help Review teams to overcome the current boundary inconsistencies and go on to implement a thorough review of their service, for the following reasons:

- *The liaison aspect in particular, will help identify what work needs to be done/provided, and by whom. Pressure will therefore be put on other organisations to provide quality Emergency Management and it will also ensure that work is not duplicated* (stakeholder from an English Two Tier authority receiving grant allocation)

- *The model will help to clearly identify the existing limitations in current service levels caused by inconsistent working boundaries, and help inform local decisions about the level of service* (respondent employed by an English Two Tier authority receiving grant allocation)
- *Provides a manageable framework* (representative from an English Two Tier authority receiving grant allocation)

One other respondent believed the support model would help but only in part because *“the real problem lies in central government not taking responsibility, rather than any local government shortcoming”*. This is particularly interesting when considering the remaining two stakeholders did not believe the model could help resolve the constraint of differing working boundaries, with one Scottish Unitary stakeholder commenting *“this is an issue to be addressed at central level”*.

From these findings, the author has concluded the support model will help Emergency Management Best Value Review teams ensure a robust Review takes place regardless of the working boundaries to which their service is provided. However, the author acknowledges working boundaries have the potential to influence the approaches adopted by different Review teams in relation to local arrangements and procedures within their area. A consistent approach to considering the questions raised in the model could only be adopted if central government ensured local authorities either worked to the same boundaries or provided detailed guidance as to how the differences between working



boundaries could be overcome. Once again, this is not a limitation of the support model but arguably of the national delivery of local authority Emergency Management.

#### Lack Of Understanding Of Emergency Management By The Public:

Stakeholders were asked to consider how the model could help to assist Review teams in dealing with the perceived constraint of the public not understanding the Emergency Management service. Stakeholders expressed broad support for the support model being able to help a Review team in addressing the current lack of public understanding in relation to local authority Emergency Management provision with five respondents believing that the model would help with a further four suggesting the model would help in part.

Those stakeholders who considered the model would help overcome this constraining factor cited the following reasons:

- *The model will help local authorities to properly consider the involvement of the public in Emergency Planning, something largely and erroneously ignored in the U.K.* (respondent from an English Two Tier grant receiving local authority);
- *With the current high profile of Emergency Planning this lack of understanding will change* (stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving local authority).

Several stakeholders were supportive of the model but felt it would only be able to help in part for the following reasons:

- *The model will ensure the public are consulted and therefore increase understanding. Any awareness raising/information to the public no matter how small will help. This has been something that is often missing and is an important part of emergency preparedness i.e. any incident will effect the community in some way (stakeholder employed by an English Two Tier grant receiving local authority);*
- *We have a long way to go here. As district councils we are closer to the public yet have no funding for Emergency Planning (stakeholder from an English Two Tier non-grant receiving local authority).*

However, two respondents did not feel this model would help to effectively raise the public awareness and understanding of this service. One respondent from an English Single Tier local authority in receipt of grant funding expressed the opinion Best Value did not offer the appropriate mechanism through which to inform the public about Emergency Management. This respondent felt Best Value does not present the opportunity to give the public useful and potential life saving information about how to respond to an emergency instead it focuses upon how and why the service is delivered. Instead, this person considered *“I think we could look at the American Red Cross as a model of increasing awareness to the general public and hence then offering advice on what to do in an emergency”*. This comment implies whilst this particular stakeholder is in favour of telling the public about the Emergency Management service and what to do

in the event of an emergency, they are not necessarily in agreement with the ‘consult’ principle of Best Value that the public are expected to have an input into how services are delivered and not just be told about what is available. However, whilst this is an important perception about Best Value it does not reflect whether or not the respondents believe the prototype would assist a team in meeting the requirements of Best Value. Similarly, the respondent representing a Scottish Unitary queried “*do the public need an understanding of Emergency Management?*” which suggests there is still some resistance to adopting all of the principles of Best Value. Once again, these criticisms do not perhaps reflect weaknesses within the support model but highlight current confusion within national Emergency Management service delivery as to the role of the public, an issue that can only be resolved at a level higher than individual local authorities.

The positivity, neutrality and negativity expressed by all eleven respondents in relation to the identified constraints is summarised in Figure 8.1.

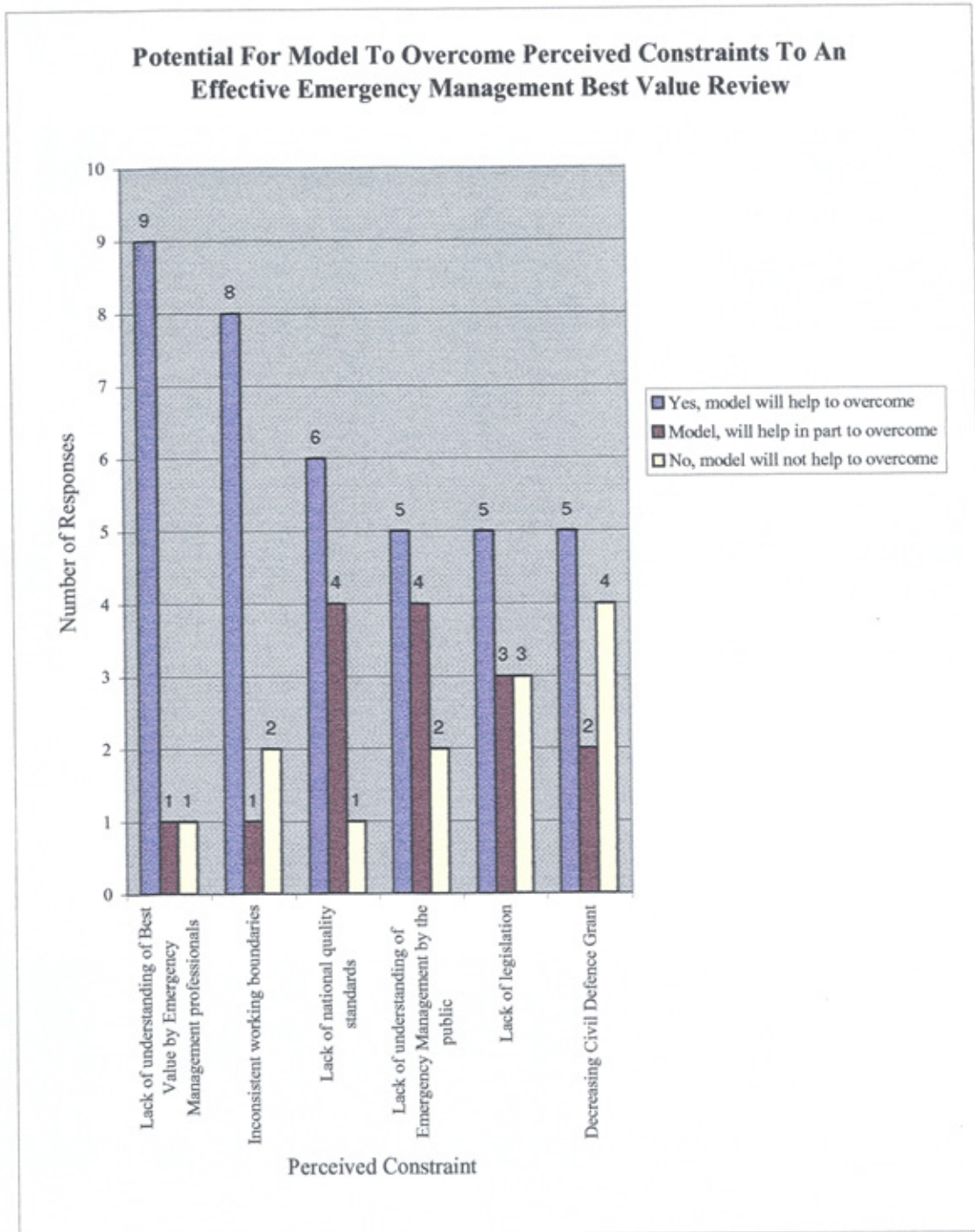


Figure 8.1.: Potential For Model To Overcome Perceived Constraints To An Effective Emergency Management Best Value Reviews

When considering all six constraints together one stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving authority expressed the view “*(for all these constraints), there is value in that the model should help to bring a national consistency to a national duty (Best Value) currently not applied to a local authority service (Emergency Planning)*”.

It is interesting to compare the findings shown in Figure 8.1. with those obtained from the first stage of the evaluation process, the literature review and analysis of the census data.

The review of literature revealed very little specific literature had been produced which applied Best Value directly to Emergency Management provision. Indeed, the literature in existence was of a very basic and introductory nature rather than describing or presenting a detailed process local authorities could adopt. The stakeholder census revealed whilst all stakeholders were aware of Best Value, the majority were uncertain as to how it would be applied to their Emergency Management service. This finding influenced the decision to produce a specific support model which local authorities could implement as part of such a service’s Best Value Review. Stakeholders who participated in the first stage of the model’s evaluation positively stated it would help to improve Emergency Management professionals perceived lack of understanding of Best Value. As discussed earlier in this chapter, these stakeholders were, as a result of their own personal experience of taking part in an Emergency Management Best Value Review, able to suggest a series of modification to strengthen the model. It is clear from Figure 8.1. the majority of second stage evaluation respondents (nine) believe the model will improve the understanding of Emergency Management professionals in relation to Best

Value and thereby overcome one of the constraints identified at the beginning of this research.

The majority of stakeholders who participated in the census identified inconsistent working boundaries as a potential factor that could hinder the achievement of an effective Emergency Management Best Value Review. Indeed, this finding mirrored those concerns expressed in the review of literature by Parker (April 1991) and Cunningham (March 2002) that attempts must be made to revolve the response to emergencies over-lapping jurisdictional boundaries. The stakeholders who participated in the first stage of the model evaluation represented a range of both Single and Two Tier local authorities. All respondents positively stated the support model would have assisted them in achieving a more robust Emergency Management Best Value Review and would have been workable within their type of authority. Similarly, the majority of respondents (eight) who took part in the second phase of the evaluation process also believed the model would be implementable regardless of boundaries to which a local authority operates.

The current lack of national Emergency Management quality standards, as discussed in Chapters Three and Four, were seen by many (Vary, 2000, Turner, October 2000, Cunningham, March 2002) as a shortfall within the current provision of Emergency Management as without such standards it is difficult to monitor the effectiveness of the service being delivered. This concern was echoed by the majority of census participants who considered the lack of such standards would make it difficult to achieve an effective

Emergency Management Review. During the model's initial evaluation, participants commented positively the model would assist Best Value Review teams in comparing and measuring their Emergency Management services. The majority of participants in the second stage of evaluation (six) agreed the model would help to overcome the current lack of standards whilst a further four considered it would help in part. Overall, these findings suggest whilst local authorities can endeavour to use the model to compare and measure their Emergency Management services this can realistically only be achieved by central government taking a lead and implementing standards on a national basis which are subsequently measured, monitored and rectified where appropriate. This evaluation has shown the support model has a positive role to play in highlighting the current lack of standards and the impact of this upon the delivery of Emergency Management services of equal importance is the model tries to address this lack of standards rather than ignoring the current deficiency in performance measurement.

Lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public emerged from both the literature review and the census findings as another constraint that could impact upon the effectiveness of a Best Value Review. To try to address this issue, and meet the needs of the 'consult' aspect of Best Value, the support model was developed to ensure public consultation was sought in relation to all Emergency Management activities. Many of those stakeholders who participated in the first stage of the evaluation process commented their own recent Best Value Review had not involved seeking the views of the public, indeed several had been asked to consider this issue further. All stage one stakeholders believed the model, if it had been available for them to use at the time of

their own Review, would have greatly assisted them in consulting more effectively with the public and thereby raising their understanding of the Emergency Management provision. The majority of stage two participants (five) also believed the model will help Best Value Review teams to overcome the public's perceived lack of understanding in relation to the service, with a further four respondents stating the model would help in part to overcome this potentially constraining factor.

The legislative framework that currently underpins the local authority Emergency Management service, discussed extensively in Chapters Three and Four, has been criticised by many practitioners and academics (Brook, 1991, The Disasters Working Party, 1991, Ward, November 2000, Cabinet Office, February 2002) as being unsuitable for today's world. Unsurprisingly, census participants identified a lack of specific Emergency Management legislation could constrain the achievement of an effective Best Value Review. For this reason, the support model was developed to explicitly state the full remit of the Emergency Management service. Stakeholders involved in the first stage of model evaluation considered the model did indeed accurately portray the full scope of the service. However, whilst five of the participants in the second stage of evaluation felt the model would help local authorities to achieve effective Best Value Reviews despite the lack of legislation, a further six participants were not as positive, i.e. three felt the model would only help in part and a further three respondents did not feel the model would help to overcome this issue. These findings appear to mirror the earlier expressed views of Parker (April 1991) and Cunningham (March 2002) in Chapter Three that in order to strengthen the service, central government must enact appropriate legislation.



Overall, as with the earlier discussed issue of the current lack of quality standards, evaluation has found the model would assist Best Value Review teams in highlighting the inadequacies within the current status of legislation forming the basis of the local authority Emergency Management service.

As discussed in Chapters Three and Four, the funding of Emergency Management has been in steady decline since the 1990s (Steed, 1998) and the mechanism for distributing this funding has been criticised (E.P.S., October 2001). For these reasons, it was perhaps not surprising that census participants identified decreasing Civil Defence Grant funding as another potential constraint upon implementing an Emergency Management Best Value Review. A series of specific questions in relation to the potential use of ‘competition’ within the delivery of future Emergency Management provision were incorporated into the support model to ensure Review teams scrutinise the current use of funding and consider possible alternative sources of funding and service delivery mechanisms. The use of ‘compete’ aspects of the model were strengthened by incorporating the comments made by stage one evaluation participants. These comments were made as a result of stage one participants citing their own recent experiences of being involved in an Emergency Management Best Value Review. Similar to the findings expressed earlier in relation to lack of specific Emergency Management legislation, the findings shown in Figure 8.1. suggest whilst five respondents believe the model will help Review teams to overcome decreasing Grant a further six respondents were not so positive with two believing that the model would only help in part and a further four respondents considering it would not help to overcome declining grant

funding. These findings suggest whilst the support model will flag this issue, it is beyond the control individual local authorities to overcome the issue of funding without some form of central government intervention.

#### Potential Benefits Of Emergency Management Best Value Reviews:

Participants were asked to indicate to what extent, if at all, they believed the support model would assist a Review team in achieving the following five benefits (identified during the census) when implementing an Emergency Management Best Value Review; improved quality of Emergency Management service, developing partnerships, providing an Emergency Management service which responds to public needs, opportunity for continuous improvement and raising professionalism of Emergency Management.

#### Improved Quality Of Emergency Management Service:

Stakeholders who participated in the census expressed the hope Best Value would result in the improved quality of local authority Emergency Management services. During the second stage of model evaluation stakeholders were asked to consider to what extent it would help Review teams to achieve this improvement in quality. All eleven responding stakeholders believed the model was capable of helping local authorities to improve the quality of Emergency Management services for the following reasons:

- *The model focuses on every aspect of Emergency Management and will therefore improve the overall service if used* (stakeholder from an English Two Tier grant receiving local authority);
- *Help Emergency Managers to focus on the real issues, save time in undertaking Best Value Reviews* (respondent employed by an English Two Tier grant receiving local authority);
- *Any review process will help this aspect and is much needed* (a Scottish Unitary respondent);
- *It will focus Emergency Planning Departments attentions on areas considered by partners to be important* (stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving local authority);

The support model was devised so it could be used by Emergency Management Best Value Review teams to diagnose areas of strength and weakness in existing service delivery. From this point, Review teams would then be in a position, providing they acted upon the information diagnosed by the model's usage, to subsequently improve the service through appropriate remedial actions. The author believes the responses received from those who participated in the evaluation process do prove it is possible to use the model as a diagnostic tool.

### Developing Partnerships:

Many participants from the stakeholder census considered in Chapter Six expressed the hope that implementing Best Value in Emergency Management would result in developing partnerships. With this in mind, stakeholders were asked to consider whether the model would encourage the development of such partnerships. Ten out of eleven responding stakeholders believed the model would help local authorities to develop partnerships during a Best Value Review of their Emergency Management service, while the one remaining stakeholder considered the support model would help in part.

Those stakeholders who considered the Best Value Review support model would help stated the following reasons:

- *The model gives the message that it is essential to compare, liaise etc with a wide variety of different organisations. Using the model will identify which organisations have an impact on Emergency Management and therefore may lead to development of agreements/partnerships between organisations to increase the quality of Emergency Management within a local/geographical areas (but also nationally) (respondent from English Two Tier grant receiving authority);*
- *The model should help to bring benchmarking clubs together and identify partnerships which perhaps do not already exist (stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving authority);*
- *Encouraging consultation and comparison should help develop new and existing partnerships (a Scottish Unitary respondent);*

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Corrigan et al. (1999) claim local authorities must strive to find new and innovative ways in which to deliver their services in the future. The census findings suggested whilst Grant funding declines many Emergency Management stakeholders are aware that developing partnerships could enhance future delivery of the service. These views were particularly important when developing the ‘consult’ and ‘compete’ aspects of the bottom-tier explanatory diagrams. The evaluation findings suggest the vast majority of stakeholders do believe use of the model could result in developing such partnerships.

#### Providing An Emergency Management Service Which Responds To Public Needs:

Another potential benefit of implementing Best Value within Emergency Management was the opportunity to ensure a service was being provided that responded to public needs. Stakeholders studying the model were asked to consider to what extent this would help to achieve that benefit. Seven out of the eleven responding stakeholders (representing English Single and Two Tier authorities as well as Welsh Unitaries) believed the support model was capable of helping Review teams to provide an Emergency Management service responding to the needs of the public. Indeed, one such stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving authority claimed:

*In every stage of every process, reference is made to public consultation. It therefore enforces that there needs to be a two way conversation with the public*

*and because Best Value is a continuous process, the needs of the public will be taken into consideration during every review stage.*

Three respondents from English Two Tier authorities considered the model would help but only in part, citing the following reasons:

- *The model should help local authorities to think about their dealings with the public in terms of Emergency Planning in a more structured way (haphazard at present). However, there also needs to be a greater willingness to do this, for which I am afraid only legislation can guarantee to be the motivational force (stakeholder from English Two Tier grant receiving authority);*
- *Only if public are fully engaged in the review (English Two Tier grant receiving authority respondent).*

The respondent representing a Scottish Unitary was uncertain, despite studying the model as to whether it would help a local authority to determine if its Emergency Management service is provided in-line with the needs of the public. Indeed, this stakeholder commented, *“I understand the ‘principle’ of this one but think that we are a long way from the ‘practice’”*.

Once again, the strong support from the majority of respondents suggests correct implementation of the model should help to ensure an Emergency Management service is provided which responds to the needs of the public.

### Opportunity For Continuous Improvement:

The census results indicated those involved in Emergency Management were keen to see Best Value Reviews resulted in continuous improvement within the service. The support model was developed, and subsequently strengthened in relation to this area as discussed earlier in this chapter, to incorporate a clear link to achieving continuous improvement. Stakeholders were asked to indicate to what extent they considered the model would assist Review teams in achieving continuous improvement. Nine stakeholders believed the model would help Review teams diagnose ways in which continuous improvement could be achieved within an Emergency Management service suggesting:

- *Review teams will use the model on a continuous basis and it will therefore identify how the service can be best provided and improved (stakeholder employed by an English Two Tier grant receiving authority);*
- *Year on year comparison and review should provide this (respondent from Scottish Unitary);*
- *It will focus Emergency Planning Departments attention on areas considered by partners to be important (an English Two Tier grant receiving authority);*

One respondent considered the model would only help in part to achieve continuous improvement because *“the model will help here, but only if it is continually referred to, and not forgotten about when the Best Value Review is over”*. The author believes this respondent has raised a very important point that the model can only achieve its aim if Best Value Review teams use it correctly by continually referring to it throughout the duration of a Review and then acting upon the subsequent findings. Whilst this is

perhaps not a limitation of the model, it does suggest, once again, some form of central government and professional body co-ordination overseeing the use of the model, ideally linked to a monitoring role, would greatly enhance its potential for ensuring continuous improvement.

Finally, one stakeholder representing an English Two Tier local authority did not believe the support model would achieve on-going improvement within the Emergency Management service because he considered “*that Best Value and continuous improvement do not go hand in hand*”. Again, this comment implies that rather than the respondent believing the model cannot assist in the achievement of continuous improvement, he instead is perhaps not convinced Best Value itself is actually about securing on-going improvement in a service’s delivery.

When considering the findings overall, the majority of respondents do believe the model will help to ensure continuous improvement in the Emergency Management service.

#### Raising Professionalism Of Emergency Management:

The census also revealed many stakeholders hoped that as a direct consequence of undergoing a Best Value Review the professionalism of the service would be raised. Stakeholders were asked to bear this in mind when studying the model.

All stakeholders believed the model would, to differing degrees, help to raise the professionalism of the Emergency Management service. In total, nine of the eleven



stakeholders felt the model would help to achieve this heightened professionalism while the other two respondents believed it would help in part. The following reasons were cited for this support:

- *Emergency Management will be given the value that it needs as more people will need to be involved in every stage of the service provision. It will also help dovetail Emergency Planning procedures throughout the country* (English Two Tier grant receiving authority respondent);
- *The model clearly enhances the academic and professional status of Emergency Planning* (stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving authority);
- *Any management process that can be applied and developed by practitioners should increase the professionalism of the service/people* (respondent employed by a Scottish Unitary).

The respondents who participated in this evaluation exercise believed application of the model by Best Value Review teams could raise the professionalism of the Emergency Management service.

Figure 8.2. summarises the respondents views (positive, neutral and negative) in relation to the model assisting Review teams in achieving all the potential benefits of implementing an Emergency Management Best Value Review.

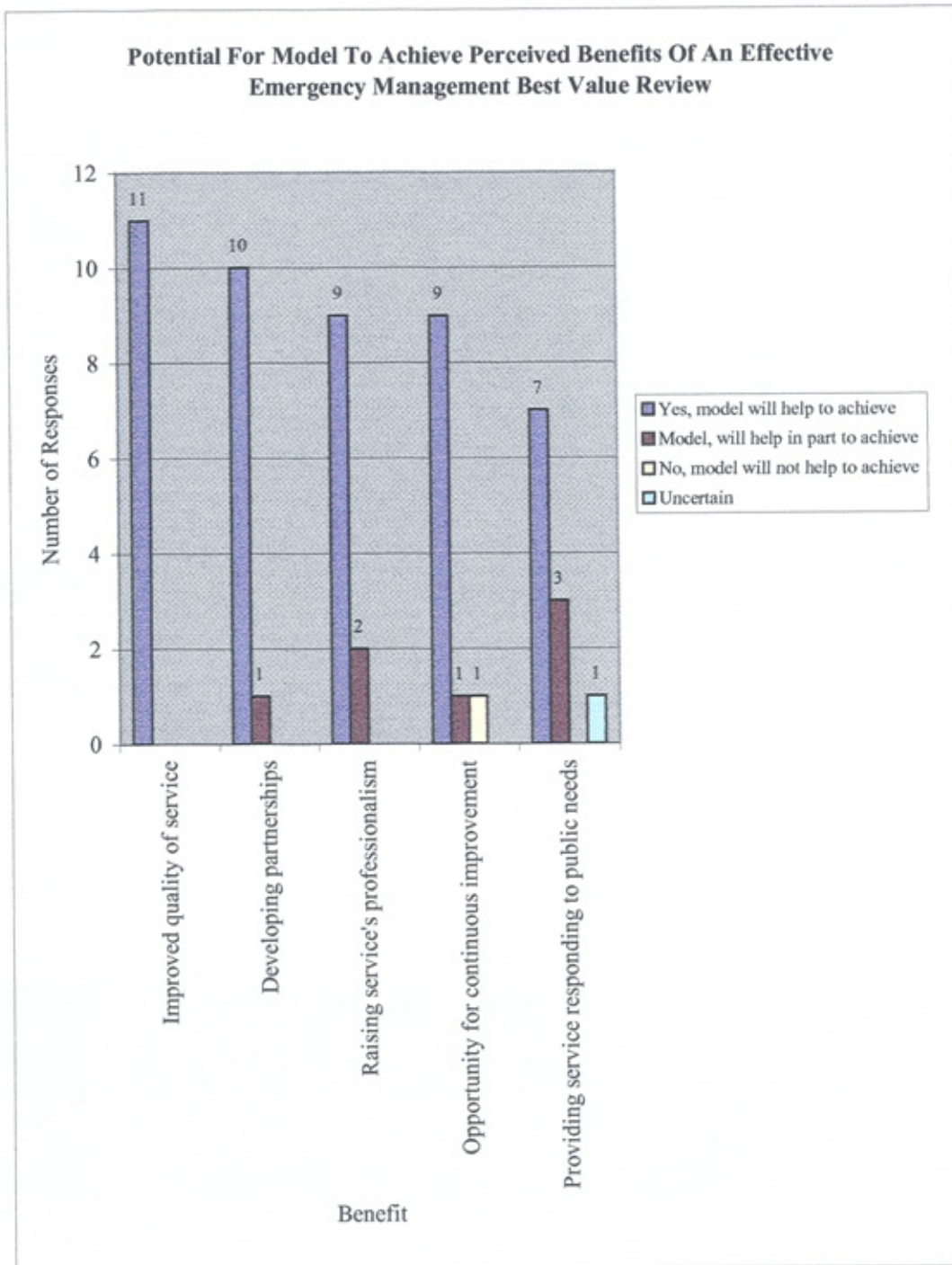


Figure 8.2.: Potential For Model To Achieve Perceived Benefits Of An Effective Emergency Management Best Value Review

It is important to consider the findings shown in Figure 8.2. with those obtained from the earlier evaluation undertaken as well as the findings of the review of literature and census.

The majority of census respondents indicated they hoped Best Value being implemented within local authority Emergency Management provision would result in the quality of the service improving. The support model was developed in order to assist the achievement of improving service quality. All those who participated in the first stage of evaluation positively stated the model would have helped to achieve a more robust Review of their service and would have ensured many avoided issues such as public consultation and the use of competition were addressed and the service subsequently improved as much as possible. All participants who took part in the second stage of the evaluation believed the model would help to subsequently improve the quality of the Emergency Management service delivered by a local authority.

The opportunity to develop partnerships was highlighted by census participants as another potential benefit of Best Value. The participants in stage one of the evaluation agreed the model would assist in developing and strengthening partnerships. Similarly, ten out of these stage two participants held the same belief.

As discussed earlier, the review of literature found detailed national standards capable of measuring the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of national local authority Emergency Management provision do not currently exist. This perhaps provides an insight into the census finding that stakeholders hope Best Value will achieve a rise in the

professionalism of local authority Emergency Management services. It is encouraging the findings of both the first and second evaluation exercises positively found Emergency Management stakeholders believed the model would help to raise the standard of service delivery. Similarly, census respondents hoped Best Value would result in the service improving on a continuous basis. Whilst participants in the first stage of the evaluation felt the model could be strengthened considerably in this area, the vast majority of second stage participants (nine) felt the model would assist Review teams in ensuring such improvements were achieved.

A lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public was earlier identified as being a potential constraint to implementing an effective service Review. However, the census participants also hoped Best Value implementation in the service would result in local authorities providing services responding to the needs of their public. Many of the participants who took part in the first stage of evaluation commented whilst their own recent Emergency Management Best Value Review had not been able to effectively address the issue of public consultation the support model would have greatly assisted them in overcoming these difficulties. The majority of stage two participants positively commented the model would help Review teams ensure a service was provided which responded to the needs of the public with seven respondents believing that the model would help to achieve this and a further three respondents considering that it would help in part.

### Application Of ‘Cs’:

Every stakeholder was asked to indicate whether they believed the bespoke framework fully emphasises the ‘Four Cs’ and continuous improvement that underpin the definition of a Best Value Review.

None of the stakeholders who participated in this evaluation suggested any modifications to the ‘challenge’ aspects of either the middle or bottom tiers. From this, the author has concluded the model has successfully built upon the earlier identified strengths of ISO9000 (British Quality Foundation, 1998, Dahlgaard et al., 1998, Cabinet Office, 2001) as discussed in detail in Chapter Seven.

Similarly, each stakeholder was satisfied the ‘compare’ requirement of Best Value had been fully incorporated into the model. As described in the model development chapter, this was achieved by building upon ‘compare’ principles contained within ISO900, Charter Mark (Cabinet Office, 2001, [www.chartermark](http://www.chartermark), 2002, [www.isixsigma](http://www.isixsigma), 2002) and the Excellence Model (Lascelles and Peacock, 1996, British Quality Foundation, 1998, Cabinet Office, 2001). No amendments were suggested by any of the stakeholders in relation to this aspect of the support model.

‘Consult’ was another of the ‘Cs’ that formed the basis of the middle and bottom tiers of the model. This was achieved by identifying the ‘consult’ strengths of the Charter Mark, I.I.P. (British Quality Foundation, 1998, [www.isoeasy](http://www.isoeasy), 2002) and the Excellence Model

to then tailor them specifically to the Emergency Management provision. As with the previous 'Cs', none of the evaluation respondents could suggest any ways in which 'consult' aspects could be improved further.

The application of 'compete' to the service was an essential element of the model. This aspect was devised by considering the earlier identified beneficial characteristics of the Charter Mark, I.I.P. and the Excellence Model. Once again, no respondent suggested any modification in relation to the 'compete' part of Best Value indicating its application to Emergency Management was comprehensive.

The need to achieve continuous improvement is one of the key requirements of Best Value. Initially the support model implied the need for Emergency Management services to continuously improve following a Best Value Review. However, following the first evaluation exercise potential users felt the model should have an explicit reference to continuous improvement. As described earlier in this chapter, the model was subsequently amended. All stakeholders who participated in the second phase of the model's evaluation believed continuous improvement has now been reflected accurately in the model. None of the stakeholders were able to suggested any modifications to strengthen this particular requirement.

In summary, all stakeholders were unanimous in the belief the Review support model did indeed fully apply all the Best Value 'Cs' to the Emergency Management service,

including continuous improvement which was perceived to be weaker during the first stage of evaluation.

As a result of this latest finding the author is confident earlier limitations identified in stage one in relation to the portrayal of the 'Cs' have been overcome. This finding suggests the author has indeed been able to build upon those strengths identified earlier in this research in relation to the existing quality management models (as shown in Table 7.8.) and take these a stage further by adding an additional layer of formal expertise by incorporating Emergency Management professional specifications.

#### Issues Influencing Current And Future Emergency Management Delivery:

Following analysis of the data gathered during the census of stakeholders twelve issues were identified which appeared to influence how an Emergency Management service was currently delivered as well as the perception as to how it could be delivered in the future:

- Civil Defence Grant status;
- Local authorities making an in-house financial contribution towards the service;
- Perceived consistency of service delivery across the U.K.;
- Perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the U.K.;
- Local authority structure (i.e. Single or Two Tier);
- Perception of service integration into authority's corporate aims and objectives;
- Perceived chief officer support for service;
- Level of support for national Emergency Management Inspectorate;

- Level of support for national performance indicators;
- Level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs;
- Level of confidence in community awareness of the service;
- Belief Emergency Plans would be effective if understood by the public.

Stakeholders were asked to indicate their initial reaction to these issues using one of the following responses: “I would expect this to be an influencing issue”, “I would not expect this to be an influencing issue” or “Uncertain”. The responses received to these questions provided the opportunity to verify the accuracy of the results from the census by comparing these with the perceptions of a key group of stakeholders. By doing this, any aspects of the model suggested for future research in Chapter Nine will build upon well established perceptions within the Emergency Management community.

#### Civil Defence Grant Status:

Stakeholders were asked to indicate whether or not they would expect a local authority’s Grant status to influence how an Emergency Management service is currently delivered as well as how it could be delivered in the future. The vast majority of stakeholders (ten out of eleven), stated they would expect Grant status to influence how a service is, and can be, delivered. The Scottish Unitary stakeholder stated he did not expect Grant status to influence how the service is delivered. This different opinion is perhaps due to the fact Civil Defence Grant funding was abolished in Scotland in 2001 and is therefore no longer a consideration within Scottish Emergency Management delivery.



#### Local Authorities Making An In-house Financial Contribution Towards The Service:

Similarly, stakeholders were asked to give their view of whether an authority making an in-house financial contribution towards the Emergency Management service would influence how the service was delivered. Ten of eleven respondents representing all types of mainland U.K. local authorities expressed the view they would expect an in-house contribution being made to influence the delivery of this service. In contrast, only one stakeholder representing an English Single Tier local authority was uncertain whether they would expect this issue to be an influencing factor in providing the service.

#### Perceived Consistency Of Service Delivery Across The U.K.:

The perception of consistency of Emergency Management delivery across the U.K. was yet another influencing factor stakeholders were asked to consider. The data collected revealed all eleven respondents expected this to influence current and future service delivery.

#### Perceived Need For Emergency Arrangements To Dovetail Across The UK:

The data gathered from stakeholders who participated in the census suggested the perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the U.K. influenced how local authorities deliver their Emergency Management services. Stakeholders who

participated in the second stage of the evaluation process were requested to indicate their level of surprise at this perceived influencing factor. Whilst one stakeholder representing an English Two Tier authority was uncertain as to whether he would have expected this issue to influence service delivery, all other respondents did expect the perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail to influence current and future delivery decisions.

#### Local Authority Structure:

The structure of a local authority was also identified as potentially influencing how Emergency Management provision is provided. Nine out of eleven respondents confirmed they would expect a local authority's structure to influence how an Emergency Management service is delivered, thereby confirming the interpretation of the data gathered from the earlier census. However, this perception was not held unanimously. One stakeholder from an English Two Tier authority did not expect structure to influence how the service was provided and a further respondent from an English Single Tier authority expressed uncertainty in relation to this issue.

#### Perception Of Service Integration Into Authority's Corporate Aims And Objectives:

Earlier analysis of census data revealed the level of service integration into a local authority's corporate aims and objectives influenced subsequent service delivery. The views of respondents participating in the second phase of the model's evaluation were sought in order to triangulate the earlier data gathered. The views of stakeholders

reinforced the extent to which an Emergency Management service is integrated into an authority's corporate aims and objectives does influence future service delivery. Ten of the eleven respondents, indicated they expected this issue to be very important in influencing the current and future delivery of the service. It interesting, however, one stakeholder representing an English Single Tier local authority did not expect the service's integration into the parent organisation's corporate aims and objectives to influence service delivery. This perhaps suggests this particular respondent, possibly as a result of their own personal experience, perceives Emergency Management to be a stand-alone service rather than a corporate function.

#### Perceived Chief Officer Support For Service:

The level of Chief Officer support towards Emergency Management was identified as a factor governing how an Emergency Management service is currently provided and could be in the future. As with the previous factor, ten from eleven respondents from all types of local authority in differing geographical locations, indicated they would expect the level of Chief Officer support for Emergency Management to influence how the service was delivered. Only one respondent from an English Single Tier authority did not expect Chief Officer support to influence the current and future delivery of the Emergency Management service.

#### Level Of Support For National Emergency Management Inspectorate:

Respondents were then asked to indicate whether they expected support for a national Emergency Management Inspectorate to impact upon current and future delivery. All eleven respondents indicated they would expect support for an Inspectorate to influence Emergency Management service provision.

#### Level Of Support For National Performance Indicators:

Census participants suggested support for national performance indicators would influence Emergency Management provision and second stage evaluation participants were asked to consider this. Again, all eleven participants indicated they would expect support for national performance indicators to influence Emergency Management service delivery.

#### Level Of Confidence In Providing A Service Reflecting Local Community Needs:

Analysis of the census data found the level of confidence in providing an Emergency Management service which reflected the needs of the local community could influence how a service is provided. Evaluation stakeholders were asked to what extent they agreed. Ten stakeholders from all types of local authority, excluding the Scottish Unitary, claimed they would expect the level of confidence in providing a service that reflects local community needs to indeed influence how an Emergency Management

service is delivered both now and in the future. The single Scottish Unitary stakeholder was uncertain, reiterating their earlier expressed concern that did the public really need to know about the provision of an Emergency Management service?

#### Level Of Confidence In Community Awareness Of The Service:

In a similar vein to the previous influencing factor, interpretation of the census data suggested a local authority's level of confidence in their community being aware of the Emergency Management service would also guide current and future service delivery. Eight of the eleven respondents claimed they would expect confidence in community awareness to sway the delivery of Emergency Management. However, two respondents from English Two Tier authorities did not expect this to influence service delivery whilst the Scottish Unitary representative was uncertain.

#### Belief Emergency Plans Would Be Effective If Understood By The Public:

The final influencing issue to be identified was the belief that if Emergency Plans were understood by the public they would be more effective. Stakeholders were asked to indicate their level of agreement with this finding. Unlike the majority of previous influencing issues which revealed most stakeholders held similar opinions, this was not the case in relation to the issue of Emergency Plans being understood by the public. Seven out of the eleven respondents believed that public understanding of Emergency Plans would increase their effectiveness. Indeed, all respondents from English Single

Tier local authorities and the Welsh Unitary were of this opinion. However, two respondents from English Two Tier local authorities did not expect public understanding of Plans to be a factor influencing their effectiveness. A further two respondents (one from an English Two Tier local authority and the other from a Scottish Unitary) were uncertain as to whether they would expect this issue to influence the effectiveness of Emergency Management provision.

When considering these findings collectively the author is confident the key factors identified in the census of stakeholders as drivers of Best Value implementation were intuitive. This was a very important result as the census data was used as a basis for developing the support model. It is interesting to see how flexible the model is in relation to these factors. Triangulation has indicated collectively the key drivers appear intuitive and there are no major disagreements with this across the service as part of a professional interest group.

#### Potential Implementation Of Prototype:

Stakeholders were then asked to indicate to what extent they believed it was possible for the support model to be implemented as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review within their own local authority(ies) regardless of those twelve influences discussed earlier. Stakeholders were asked to consider each of the influences and indicate whether they believed “yes, implementation (of the model) is possible”,

“implementation is possible with major revision”, “no, implementation is not possible” or if they were “uncertain”.

#### Civil Defence Grant Status:

Eight out of the ten respondents believed it was possible to implement this model regardless of a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status. Indeed, stakeholders from the Welsh Unitary and English Single Tier authorities were unanimous in this belief. However, one English Two Tier stakeholder was uncertain perhaps reflecting the confusion within the Two Tier system of government as to where responsibility for providing and funding an Emergency Management service lies. Similarly, the Scottish based respondent did not feel it was possible to implement this model stating “*simply that there is no Civil Defence Grant in Scotland*”. However, neither of the comments expressed by this English Two Tier and Scottish Unitary respondents show a limitation of the support model, instead they highlight the current anomalies in Emergency Management funding. One stakeholder representing an English Two Tier local authority did not respond to this question. This lack of response may perhaps reflect their uncertainty regarding the issue of service funding.

#### Local Authorities Making An In-house Financial Contribution Towards The Service:

Eight of the ten respondents considered the model could be implemented regardless of whether local authorities made an in-house financial contribution towards their Emergency Management service. A minority English Two Tier local authority

stakeholder was uncertain whether this factor would influence the application of the model during a Best Value Review. One English Single Tier stakeholder did not feel implementation would be possible without major revision to the model. However, no explanation was given as to what revision was required in order to overcome this issue and as a consequence the author decided to follow the majority verdict that implementation of the support model in its current form is possible as the model requires Review teams to consider alternative forms of funding and service delivery techniques.

#### Perceived Consistency Of Service Delivery Across The U.K.:

All eight stakeholders representing English Two Tier authorities, the Scottish Unitary and the Welsh Unitary felt it was possible to implement the model during a Review regardless of the perception held regarding consistency of service delivery across the U.K..

However, the two stakeholders from English Single Tier authorities had differing views. One believed implementation was possible whilst the other felt implementation was only possible with major revision. Unfortunately, the stakeholder who felt major revision was needed did not provide any detail as to what revision was required. As with the previous issue, in the absence of any suggested revision being provided the author was satisfied the vast majority of stakeholders did consider the model in its current form was implementable.



### Perceived Need For Emergency Arrangements To Dovetail Across The U.K.:

Nine of ten responding stakeholders considered the model could be implemented regardless of the perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the U.K. As with the previous influencer, one of English Tier stakeholders held the view implementation of the support model would only be possible if major revision was undertaken in order to address this issue. Once again this stakeholder did not expand upon why they held this opinion nor what format such revision should take.

### Local Authority Structure:

Again, nine of the ten respondents felt it would be possible to implement this model during a Review regardless of a local authority's structure. However, one English Single Tier stakeholder was uncertain. This uncertainty can perhaps be due to the fact Single Tier local authorities provide all services within their catchment area and therefore they are perhaps unaware of the potential difficulties facing authorities working within the Two Tier system of local government.

### Perception Of Service Integration Into Authority's Corporate Aims And Objectives:

Both respondents from the Scottish and Welsh Unitaries believed the model could be implemented regardless of the Emergency Management service's integration into the parent authority's corporate aims and objectives. Six stakeholders representing both English Two Tier and English Single Tier authorities also held the same view. However,

one stakeholder from English Two Tier authorities was uncertain as to whether implementation would be possible whilst another respondent from an English Single Tier authority claimed implementation was only possible if major revision was made to the model. Unfortunately, this minority English Single Tier stakeholder did not provide any explanation as to what revision they considered was necessary. For this reason, the author accepted the opinions of the majority of stakeholders.

#### Perceived Chief Officer Support For Service:

Nine of the ten stakeholders believed the model could be implemented regardless of the perceived level of Chief Officer support for the Emergency Management service. One English Two Tier local authority stakeholder was uncertain whether implementation was possible. This uncertainty is perhaps explained by the earlier discussed confusion and ambiguity regarding roles and responsibilities for Emergency Management within the Two Tier system of local government.

#### Level Of Support For National Emergency Management Inspectorate:

All ten responding stakeholders considered the support model could be implemented regardless of the level of support for a national Emergency Management Inspectorate.

#### Level Of Support For National Performance Indicators:

Again, all ten responding stakeholders considered the model could be implemented regardless of the level of support for national performance indicators.

#### Level Of Confidence In Providing A Service Reflecting Local Community Needs:

All seven stakeholders representing English Two Tier and Welsh Unitary authorities believed the model could be implemented regardless of an authority's level of confidence it provides a service which reflects local community needs. Opinions differed amongst English Single Tier authorities with one respondent believing implementation was possible whilst another believed implementation was only possible provided there was appropriate revision made to the model. Unfortunately, this stakeholder, despite being asked, did not suggest the type of revision needed. The one stakeholder representing a Scottish Unitary was uncertain whether the support model could be implemented, perhaps mirroring their earlier uncertainty as to whether the public should be aware of the Emergency Management provision.

#### Level Of Confidence In Community Awareness Of The Service:

All stakeholders from English Two Tier authorities and the Welsh Unitary (seven in total), believed the model could be implemented regardless of an authority's level of confidence its community are aware of the service. However, opinions differed amongst

English Single Tier authorities. One respondent believed implementation was possible whilst another considered implementation was only possible provided major revision was made to the model. Once again, this respondent did not expand upon this view by suggesting the modifications needed. The Scottish Unitary respondent was uncertain whether the model could be implemented, perhaps, once again, reflecting their earlier uncertainty as to whether the public should be made aware of Emergency Management.

#### Belief Emergency Plans Would Be Effective If Understood By The Public:

All seven stakeholders from English Two Tier and Welsh Unitary authorities considered the model could be implemented regardless of the belief Emergency Plans would be effective if they were understood by the public. Once again, opinions differed amongst English Single Tier authorities. One respondent, for example, believed implementation was possible whilst another felt implementation was only possible provided major revision was made to the support model. However, no suggestions were given as to the type of revision needed. The sole Scottish Unitary respondent was uncertain regarding implementation. The author feels this uncertainty is perhaps explained by this respondent's general uncertainty regarding the need for the public to be made aware of Emergency Management.

The ability of the model to be implemented as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review despite the twelve issues deemed to influence service delivery is summarised in Figure 8.3.

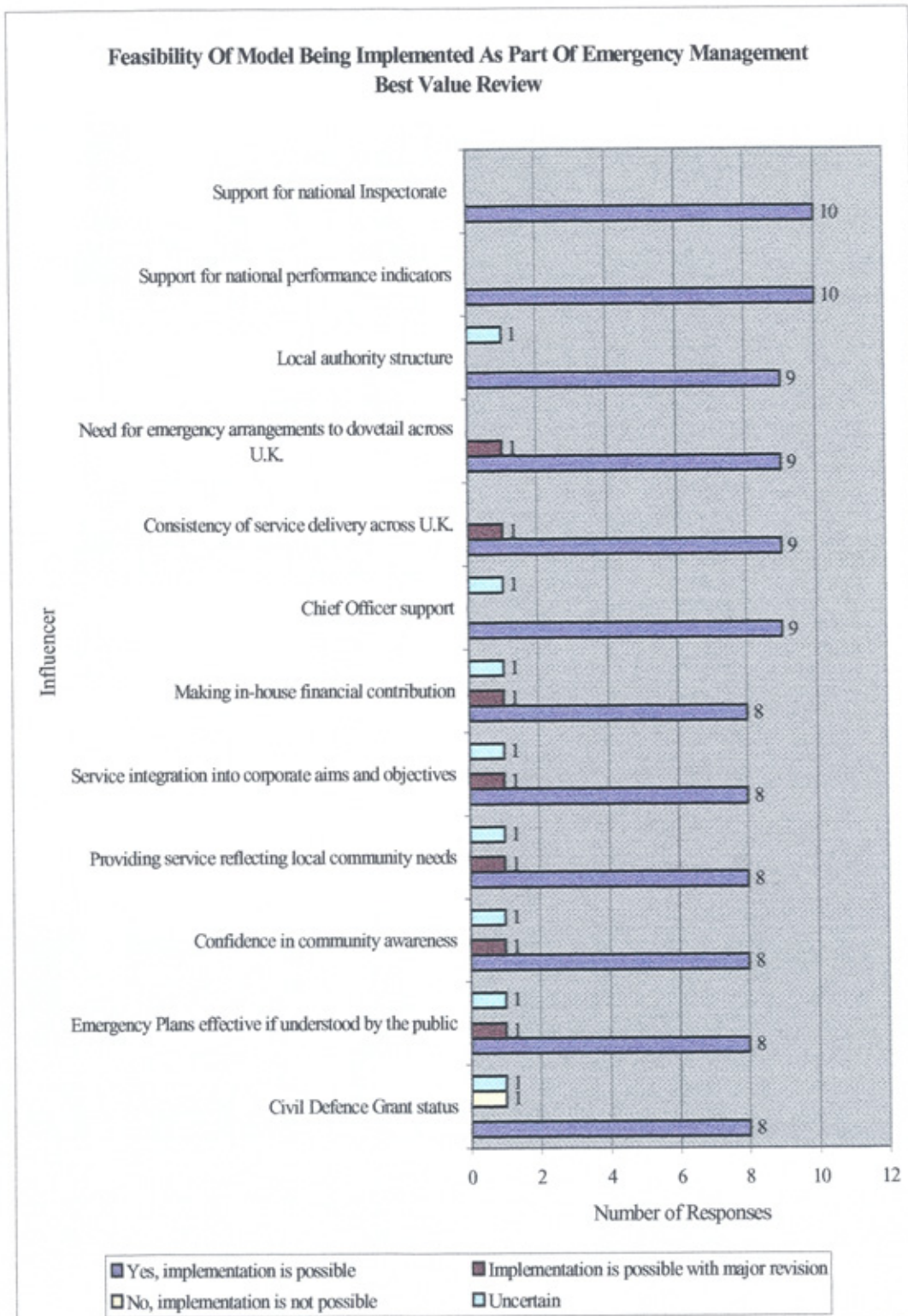


Figure 8.3.: Feasibility Of Model Being Implemented As Part Of Emergency Management Best Value Review

The findings presented in Figure 8.3. clearly display the strong level of positivity shown by evaluation stakeholders towards the feasibility of implementing the model as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review. All stakeholders believed implementation was possible regardless of support for both a national service Inspectorate and performance indicators. However, not all stakeholders were unanimous in their beliefs regarding the remaining ten factors identified as influencing service delivery. Whilst a majority of nine stakeholders felt implementation was possible regardless of a local authority's structure, one stakeholder was uncertain. This uncertainty may perhaps be explained by their lack of experience in working with local authorities with differing structures. In contrast, nine stakeholders considered it was possible to use the model despite the perception there is a need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the U.K.. However, the remaining stakeholder felt model implementation was only possible in relation to this influencer if appropriate major revision was made. As this stakeholder did not make any suggestions as to what revision was needed, this perhaps suggests the stakeholder feels there should be some central government guidance issued detailing how such dovetailing can take place. Similarly, whilst nine stakeholders felt it was possible to use the support model regardless of the perceived need for consistency of Emergency Management service delivery across the U.K., one stakeholder felt such usage was only possible with major revision being made. Once again, no recommendations were made as to the type of revision needed suggesting the stakeholder was uncertain and would appreciate central government guidance in order to achieve this level of consistency. In relation to the influencer of Chief Officer support, nine stakeholders felt implementation of the model was possible while the remaining

stakeholder was uncertain. This uncertainty perhaps suggests Emergency Management professionals providing a service without Chief Officer support feel unclear as to how the service should be reviewed and subsequently improved. A majority of eight stakeholders felt model usage was feasible regardless of a local authority making an in-house financial contribution towards the provision of an Emergency Management service. However, one stakeholder was uncertain whilst another felt usage was only possible with major revision being made. These minority views perhaps suggest some Emergency Management professionals perceive differences in local authority funding as being an issue which they alone cannot overcome when undertaking a Best Value Review. Similarly, eight stakeholders considered model implementation was possible regardless of service integration into a local authority's corporate aims and objectives. However, one stakeholder was uncertain and another felt the model required major revision in order to be usable. This perhaps mirrors the earlier finding in relation to the perceived level of Chief Officer support towards the service that Emergency Management professionals delivering a service which is not integrated into corporate aims and objectives are uncertain how to redress this imbalance and progress the service. Three of the influencing factors concerned the issue of public perception and awareness, namely providing an Emergency Management service reflecting local community needs, the level of confidence in the community being awareness of the service and the belief Emergency Plans would be effective if they were understood by the public. It is interesting for each of these influencing factors eight stakeholders considered it was possible to implement the support model with one stakeholder being uncertain and the other considering major revision was necessary. These findings appear to suggest there is some uncertainty as to

the role of the public in relation to local authority Emergency Management and that perhaps some form of central guidance is hoped for. The final influencing factor was that of Civil Defence Grant status. Once again, the majority of stakeholders considered it was possible to use the model as part of a Review regardless of Civil Defence Grant status whilst one stakeholder was uncertain and the other felt model usage was not possible. This finding perhaps suggests many stakeholders consider despite declining grant levels it is possible to scrutinise an Emergency Management service. Collectively the findings in Figure 8.3. show the majority of evaluation stakeholders regarded the implementation of the prototype within an Emergency Management Best Value Review positively.

#### Perceived Strengths And Limitations Of Best Value Review Support Model:

Stakeholders were asked to identify the strengths of the Best Value Review support model and the findings obtained are shown in Table 8.16.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strengths Of Best Value Review Support Model:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to understand format;</li> <li>• Complicated issues are portrayed in a simple yet detailed way;</li> <li>• Identified all issues for a Review team to investigate;</li> <li>• No prior knowledge needed to be able to understand the model.</li> </ul>
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Table 8.16.: Strengths Of Best Value Review Support Model

The following comments were made by stakeholders:

- *Complicated issues are portrayed in a simple, easy to understand format. Very detailed, yet easy to use (at every stage). Very helpful even for people who are*



*inexperienced in Emergency Management issues. Clear, concise and comprehensive* (stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving authority);

- *Marriage of Best Value and Emergency Management principals for the first time. Easy to understand and apply. Covers all Best Value issues. Covers all Emergency Management issues* (respondent from an English Two Tier grant receiving authority);
- *Clearly demonstrates the process to be followed in a way that I have not seen for other local authority services* (an English Two Tier non-grant receiving authority representative);
- *The structure and thoroughness of relevant issues* (stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving authority);
- *Simple and easy to understand* (a Scottish Unitary stakeholder);
- *The level of detail in the model* (a respondent employed by a Welsh Unitary).

It is possible to conclude the model identifies the issues an Emergency Management Best Value Review team would be required to investigate in order to diagnose the effectiveness of the current service delivered. The model demonstrates the Best Value process specifically in relation to Emergency Management in a simple, easy to understand and workable format. The evaluation findings show a tool has been developed which philosophically stakeholders agree with. The lack of dissent amongst stakeholders philosophically, strategically and operationally not only shows strong

support for the support model but also validates the methodology adopted throughout this research.

In contrast to the previous question, stakeholders were then asked to identify any limitations within the model and suggest ways in which these could be overcome. The limitations identified are summarised in Table 8.17.

Limitations Of Best Value Review Support Model:

- Need adequate funding in order to undertake an effective Best Value Review;
- Need Chief Officer support for Emergency Management;
- Lack of standards still make it difficult to compare the service;
- Legislation still needed in order for Best Value to achieve improvement within the service;

Table 8.17.: Limitations Of Best Value Review Support Model

One stakeholder representing an English Two Tier grant receiving authority commented:

*Adequate funding to resource the review process. Support will be needed from management/Chief Officers in order to make Emergency Management a priority. Lack of standards will make comparisons between other organisations more difficult. Legislation and performance standards would make this process easier to undertake.*

In contrast, a stakeholder representing a Scottish Unitary considered they “could not see any limitations at this point in time. Might become apparent if implementing model”.

When comparing these perceived limitations with those identified during the first stage of evaluation, it is interesting to see second stage respondents do not suggest any modifications needed to the support model either in terms of its philosophy or strategic or operational application. This indicates to the author those earlier expressed concerns by stage one interviewees have been resolved. However, the respondents in the second stage of the model evaluation have (as shown in Table 8.17.) highlighted a series of issues they believe will influence the effectiveness of the model's implementation. None of the issues of funding levels, Chief Officer support, lack of national standards and legislation can be resolved by either the author or local authorities in isolation. Instead, these issues will require central government consideration. However, the results of the evaluation exercises would suggest the support model may work as best as possible by assisting Review team members in diagnosing these areas of concern. This suggests to the author the model has gone as far as it can in ensuring the implementation of a comprehensive Best Value Review. Indeed, evaluation participants were asked to what extent they considered the model improved upon available documentation detailing the application of Best Value to Emergency Management. The findings shown in Figure 8.4. reveal the level of positive and negative support for the support model.

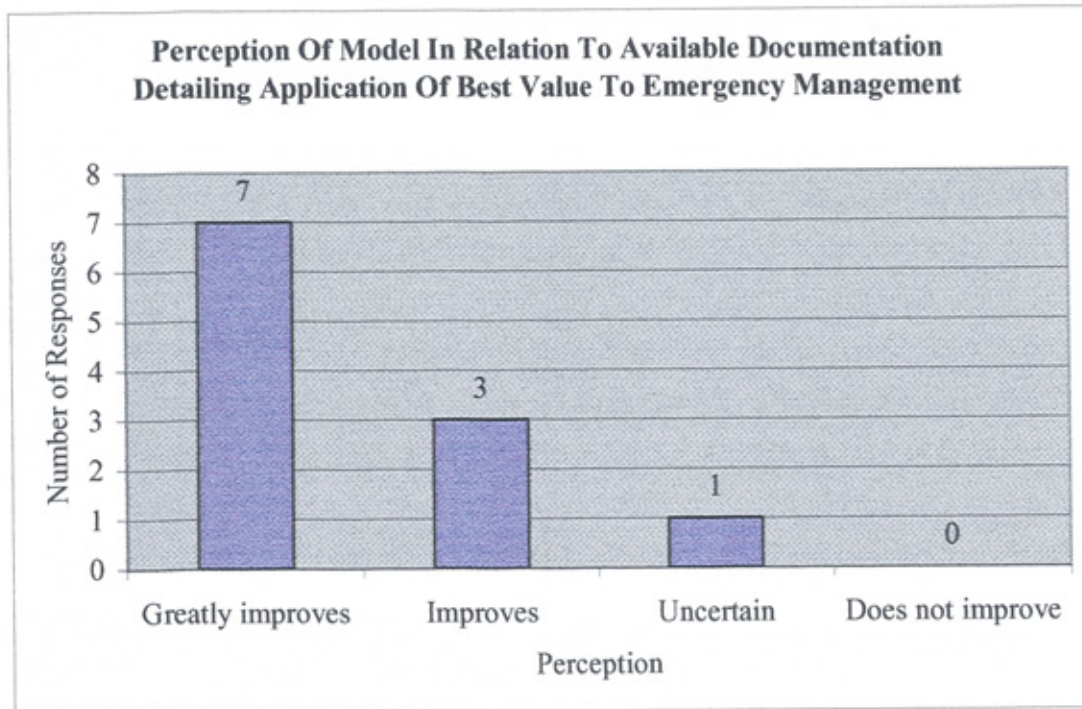


Figure 8.4.: Perception Of Model In Relation To Available Documentation Detailing Application Of Best Value To Emergency Management

The findings shown in Figure 8.4. show the vast majority of stakeholders believe the model greatly improved upon the available documentation detailing the implementation of Best Value to the service. Indeed, one stakeholder representing an English Single Tier grant receiving authority stated:

*I feel this model improves the application of Best Value. At times I have been told that Emergency Planning “does not fit into Best Value” but I feel it does and do not see any reason why it should not. At the moment Best Value and Emergency Management fall into service plans. These plans are monitored and reviewed but do not appear to be followed up if the targets in those plans are not met.*

This statement suggests that within certain authorities there is confusion regarding the need to apply Best Value to Emergency Management. However, one stakeholder representing an English Two Tier authority was uncertain whether the support model did improve upon available documentation. This finding is perhaps not surprising when considering the confusion within the Two Tier system as to where responsibility for the service rests, therefore if something arguably as basic as responsibility cannot be agreed upon it is perhaps unlikely such authorities are aware of current documentation applying Best Value principles to the service. Overall, the findings in Figure 8.4. agree with those views expressed by stakeholders who participated in the first stage of model evaluation that the support model greatly improves upon existing documentation. The Best Value Review support model developed and discussed throughout this and previous chapters is shown in Appendix S.

Conclusion:

Stages one and two evaluation exercises have identified several positive aspects to the support model, as shown in Table 8.18.

Positive Aspects Of Model Identified Following Evaluation Stages One And Two:

The prototype:

- applies the 'Four Cs' to the entire service;
- incorporates clear link to continuous improvement;
- easy to understand;
- improves upon existing available documentation;
- overcomes many of the potential constraints identified in the census;
- will assist in the achievement of the potential benefits identified in the census;
- portrays the complete process of applying Best Value to the service;
- would have greatly assisted, and strengthened, recent Reviews;
- can be implemented to some extent irrespective of differences in funding, structure, geographical location and working boundaries;
- it helps to some extent to overcome negative stakeholder perceptions of Best Value;
- it builds upon positive stakeholder perceptions of Best Value.

Table 8.19.: Positive Aspects Of Model Identified Following Evaluation Stages One And Two

The evaluation exercise findings showed many of those potential constraints and benefits of applying Best Value to Emergency Management identified by census respondents can be overcome and achieved by Review teams using the model as a part of their process.

Whilst the evaluation findings from both stages showed participants felt the model would assist in maximising the identified potential benefits, by improving quality of service, through the development of partnerships, providing service responding to public needs, providing opportunity for continuous improvement and raising service professionalism, some factors identified as having the potential to constrain the effectiveness of a Review process cannot be entirely overcome just by using the support model as they are outside the control of a local authority, as shown in Table 8.19.

Constraints Outside Of Local Authority Control:

- Implementation of national quality standards (plus subsequent measuring and monitoring);
- Review, and appropriate revision, of Emergency Management provision legislative base;
- Review of funding of provision.

Table 8.19.: Constraints Outside Of Local Authority Control

All participants in this evaluation appreciated the support model has been developed in an attempt to overcome as far as possible those constraints shown in Table 8.20. Indeed, it can be argued if the model was to be used sector-wide diagnosis findings could be used by relevant professional bodies and interest groups to give strength to arguments regarding the status of current Emergency Management legislation and the need for compliance with national standards. However, the evaluation findings reveal several strategic and legislative issues are currently constraining the delivery of an Emergency Management service and require further investigation and consideration by either central government or a national body. This will be considered in greater depth in Chapter Nine.

## **CHAPTER NINE – EVALUATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY**

### Introduction:

The purpose of this chapter is to summarise the findings obtained during this research, identify the strengths and limitations of the methodology adopted and then finally to suggest additional research which could be undertaken in the future to build upon the work presented in this thesis.

### Summary Of Research Findings:

The literature review identified that whilst plenty of information existed relating to Best Value, there was only a small, but albeit growing, body of literature focussing specifically upon Emergency Management. With the exception of one introductory guide (E.P.S., October 2000), there was no literature specific in applying the concept of Best Value directly to local authority Emergency Management. However, the issues of funding, legislation, performance measurement, organisation and culture as well as public perception emerged from this review as perhaps having the potential to influence the delivery of local authority Emergency Management provision and the perception of the impact of Best Value. To explore and measure these issues in greater detail, a census was carried out with Emergency Management stakeholders representing mainland U.K. local authorities.



Analysis of the census data provided a unique insight into how local authority Emergency Management was currently provided, the perceptions held as to how it could be delivered in the future as well as the perceived benefits and constraints of implementing Best Value within the service. Following on from this, hypothesis testing was undertaken to identify the differing levels of association in relation to funding, legislation, service monitoring, culture and public perception of local authority Emergency Management.

A series of tests were undertaken to determine the level of association that existed between the funding of an Emergency Management service and the stakeholder perception regarding the way in which the service is provided. A series of significant associations were found to exist at the 0.1%, 1% and 5% levels between an authority's Grant status and perceptions held regarding issues ranging from the perceived level of Elected Member support for the service through to opinions regarding the most appropriate working boundaries upon which to delivery the service. These associations collectively appeared to confirm the importance of central government funding in local authorities delivering an Emergency Management service, something which practitioners (Parker, April 1991, Cunningham, May 2002), academics (Llewelyn, 1998) and professionals organisations (Sidaway, February 1999, Ward, November 2000) have alluded to and the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Hargreaves, February 2003) have since acknowledged. In contrast, no significant associations were found to exist between a local authority's Grant status and perceptions in relation to several public awareness issues, including perceived local community understanding of local authority's role before, during and after an emergency, perception of the local community's awareness of the service and the perceived extent

to which the service provided reflected the needs of the local community. These lack of associations reflect the mix of arguments presented in Chapters Three and Four both for (London Emergency Planning Information Centre, March 1990, E.P.S., October 2001) and against (Turner, October 2000) the public either being aware or understanding the role of the Emergency Management provision, thereby perhaps suggesting stakeholders are just as uncertain about this issue. Indeed, this perhaps supports Crainer's (1993) argument that the issue of public understanding can only be resolved by central government assuming a lead role in this area. No significant associations existed either between Grant status and the extent to which stakeholders perceived the service could be improved by implementation of Best Value, nor their perception the service is provided to a consistent standard across mainland U.K.. However, testing revealed strong significant association existed at the 0.1% and 5% levels between a local authority making an in-house financial contribution towards the service and factors such as the belief the service can be improved by the implementation of Best Value and the perception the service should be funded solely by specific central government grant. Again, these associations appear to support claims by the L.G.A. (February 2002) that local authorities are having to 'top-up' Grant allocations in order to provide this service. This finding also appears to reflect Llewelyn's (1998) claim that as a result of declining central government funding, local authority Emergency Management services are being undermined. However, no significant association was found to exist between a local authority making a contribution towards the service and the perception the current level of central government funding was appropriate to provide an effective service. This uncertainty is mirrored in the lack of association between the belief funding should be allocated according to a risk/benefit analysis and the perceived level of confidence in providing

a service reflecting local community needs. Similarly, no association was found between the role that external funding and sponsorship could play in future service provision and the belief Civil Defence Grant formula will allocate money more effectively nor the perceived adequacy of the current level of Grant. These findings highlight the apparent uncertainty regarding alternative forms of Emergency Management service provision and funding, thereby justifying the guidance given by the E.P.S. (October 2000) that Emergency Management Best Value Review teams must explore the use of competition and the issue of alternative funding sources during a Review.

The second hypothesis focussed upon the extent to which the legislative base underpinning local authority Emergency Management influences the provision of the service. A significant association (5% level) was found to exist between the belief Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation is enacted and an authority's Grant status. This finding appears to support those 94% of people who responded to the Home Office's recent discussion document expressing their support for a new legal duty for Emergency Management and the lack of support expressed for the continuation of the 'Civil Defence Act 1948' to form the legislative basis for the service (Cabinet Office, February 2002). In contrast, no significant associations were found to exist between the perception new legislation was needed to achieve Best Value and the extent to which a local authority financially contributed towards the service nor the level of confidence the service currently provided reflected the needs of the local community. These findings perhaps support Cunningham's (March 2002) claim that with no specific duty for Emergency Management, many local authorities have not devoted the necessary resources needed to ensure a robust service

was provided and the Civil Contingencies Secretariat's (October 2002) acknowledgement that despite the number and impact of emergencies occurring in the U.K. since the late 1980s, no government in this period has attempted to clarify and strengthen the service's legislative base.

The impact of Emergency Management performance measurement and monitoring upon service delivery was considered in the third hypothesis. A very strong significant association (0.1% level) existed between the belief Emergency Management arrangements in England, Scotland and Wales should be consistent regardless of location and the perceived support for both a national Emergency Management Inspectorate and dedicated performance indicators. These findings give strength to the arguments made by Parker (April 1991) and Cunningham (May 2001) that policies are needed to ensure wide area emergencies can be responded to and that local authority Emergency Management services should be regularly audited and inspected. Indeed, these findings suggest stakeholders see audit and inspection as pivotal components in raising service standards, reflecting Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) comments that such measurement can help organisations improve their performance. Association at the 1% level was also found to exist between the perception as to who should deliver the service and levels of support for both a national Inspectorate and performance indicators. Again, these findings appear to support the E.P.S.'s (October 2001) request to central government for new legislation clearly defining local authority Emergency Management responsibilities and the creation of a dedicated Inspectorate to monitor the performance of local authorities.

Hypothesis Four explored the impact of those organisational and cultural aspects of a local authority upon the delivery of an Emergency Management service. In total, four issues were considered; geographical location, structure, high-level support and working boundaries.

In terms of geographical location, a strong significant association (0.1% level) was found between the perceived level of service consistency across the U.K. and the level of support for a service being provided by a national stand-alone Unit replacing all local authority providers. This perhaps supports the argument put forward by Cunningham (February 2003) that as a result of the current lack of specific Emergency Management duty, local authorities are left with “*an easy escape route for not providing a properly funded service*”. However, whilst Parker (April 1991) called for “*central government guidance and co-ordination*” in relation to Emergency Management and many others have called for central government to assume a greater sense of ownership for Emergency Management (Cunningham, March 2001, Cunningham, May 2001, House Of Commons, April 2002, House Of Commons, July 2002), none have stated central government should assume total responsibility for providing the service. Association at the 1% level was identified between beliefs regarding the need for service consistency across the U.K. and how the service was delivered. Similarly, a 5% association was discovered between the perception of service consistency throughout U.K. and the extent of the belief Emergency Management arrangements should be compatible regardless of variations in national and local laws or customs. These findings support the claim by Quarantelli (1991) that as a result of changes in social trends, risks and vulnerabilities, it is imperative contingency arrangements are in place to respond to emergencies.

The impact of structure was also considered and significant association (0.1% level) was found to exist with several other factors, such as how a service is delivered, the perceived extent to which the service is integrated into corporate aims and objectives, having a service working towards Best Value ahead of the legal duty, the perception a national Unit supporting local Units would provide the most effective form of service and the level of confidence in local communities being aware their authority is actively seeking to involve them in policy decision making. This reflects several of the findings detailed in the Cabinet Office's (February 2002) recent review findings document, that suggests regardless of the type of structure all local authorities should have a duty to provide this service. Indeed, Brook (1991) found integration and co-operation in Emergency Plan production varied widely between Shire Counties and Shire Districts. Association at the 1% level was identified between a local authority's structure and the belief that Best Value would enhance local government's service delivery, the belief Best Value was only achievable if new civil protection legislation was enacted, the belief the public need to be consulted in pre-planning for emergencies and the belief the public should have a role to play in responding to an emergency. Several of these findings related to stakeholders perceptions as to the potential role of a local community within future service delivery. These findings appear to support the argument put forward by Jones (1993) that a local authority's structure can influence the closeness between an authority and its community.

Association (at the 5% significance level) was found to exist between structure and the level of explicit reference to Emergency Management in the job description of the Chief Executive (or equivalent), the belief Best Value would enhance local government decision making, the perceived need for change in local government

service delivery, the perception Emergency Management services are provided consistently across the U.K., that a national Emergency Management Unit is unnecessary, there is a need for a national Emergency Management Inspectorate and the belief as to who should provide the service. Again, these findings provide an insight into how crucial a local authority's structure is in influencing the delivery of a service. In contrast, no association was found to exist between local authority structure and the belief change is necessary in local government decision making processes. This suggests local authority structure does not influence an authority's perception of current decision making processes. Similarly, structure did not impact upon stakeholders' perception Emergency Management can be improved by the implementation of Best Value, perhaps reflecting the differing views of Best Value held by Page (1997), Krawiec (October 1998) and Keady (September 1998). Page considered Best Value would help to restore the public's faith in local authorities, Krawiec believed it could either be the *"most exciting opportunity ... or ... the most centralising tool ever"* whilst Keady considered it to be incompatible with the public sector tradition. Moreover, no statistically significant associations were found to exist between the structure of an authority and stakeholders' opinion that first, Emergency Management should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries and secondly, that Emergency Management should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries. These results perhaps confirm the general uncertainty as to which working boundaries would be most suitable for the provision of an effective Emergency Management service, as discussed earlier in Chapters Three and Four.

The high-level support given to an Emergency Management service was another organisational and cultural issue identified during the literature review. Strong association (0.1% level) was found between the level of Emergency Management service integration into an authority's corporate aims and objectives and stakeholder opinion as to who should provide the service. This finding perhaps provides strength to the argument there is current confusion as to where responsibility for Emergency Management rests within the Two Tier system of local government. A further strong association (0.1% level) was found to exist between perceived Chief Officer and Elected Member support for the services.

The final organisational and cultural issue to be considered was that of working boundaries. A highly significant association (0.1% level) was found to exist between the perception Emergency Management should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries and the level of confidence a service was provided reflecting the needs of the local community. This appears to support Jones (1993) earlier claim Single Tier local authorities can provide services which are more responsive to the needs of the local community. Another strong significant association (1% level) was identified between confidence in providing a service that reflects the needs of the local community and the belief the service should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries. This finding may go some way to justifying the Prime Minister's recent decision to move ministerial responsibility for Emergency Management from the Home Office to the Cabinet Office as a result of his concern recent fuel shortages and outbreaks of foot and mouth disease were not brought under control quickly enough and that central government response needed to be strengthened (Sylvester, July 2001). Association (5%



significance level) was identified between the belief wider regional boundaries should be used when delivering the service and the perceived consistency of Emergency Management service delivery across the U.K.. This finding also appears to perhaps support central government's decision to relocate ministerial responsibility for Emergency Management (Sylvester, July 2001). In contrast, no significant association was discovered between the belief services should be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries and the perceived level of service consistency across the country. This perhaps reflects the apparent uncertainties discussed earlier in this chapter in relation to which boundaries are most appropriate for an effective service to work towards.

The final hypothesis considered the influence of public awareness and understanding upon current and future delivery of Emergency Management services. The level of stakeholders confidence in their local community being aware of the Emergency Management service had a significant association (0.1% level) with both an explicit reference for the service being made in a Chief Executive's (or equivalent) job description as well as the perceived level of Elected Member support for the service. This suggested local authorities with supportive Elected Members and Chief Officer's holding explicit Emergency Management responsibilities incorporated into their job descriptions, were more likely to have a community that is aware of this service. This also suggests such authorities are more likely to have built upon the guidance given by the Home Office and endeavoured to integrate Emergency Management arrangements into their everyday working structures (Home Office, 1998). Equally strong association (0.1% level) was found between stakeholder confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the public and the perception a stand-alone

Unit would provide the most effective form of service. However, association at the 0.1% level was also identified between confidence in providing service reflecting the needs of the public and the feeling that such a national Unit was unnecessary. Both these findings appear to support the views of Parker (April 1991) and Cunningham (May 2001) who feel some level of national input, though not in the form of entire replacement, was needed in Emergency Management delivery. An association (0.1% level) also existed between stakeholder perception that Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public and the belief such documents should be made publicly available. This result supports the work of Emergency Management professionals and representative bodies (London Emergency Planning Information Centre, March 1990, Broughton, 1998, Hennessey, 1998, E.P.S., October 2001) whilst contradicting the claim by Corrigan et al. (1999) that many authorities are fearful of raising the public's service expectations because there are never enough resources available to do everything the public requires. Association (5% level) was identified between confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the local community and their perception the service could improve as a result of Best Value implementation. This finding appears to reflect the Audit Commission's (1999) belief Best Value Reviews should result in local authorities challenging existing service planning approaches and adopting new methods thereby breaking down service delivery barriers. No significant associations were found to exist between confidence in the public knowing an authority has a role to perform before, during and after an emergency and the belief Best Value implementation will improve the service nor having a service working towards Best Value prior to it becoming a statutory duty. These findings suggest many stakeholders were uncertain whether Best Value in isolation was enough to provide the opportunity to change service delivery, thereby

acknowledging Filkin's (June 1999) concern that legislative change alone (by making Best Value a statutory duty) would not ensure 'true' Best Value was achieved in local authority services as there needed to be changes also in attitudes, performance and skills base. No significant associations were found to exist between stakeholder confidence in providing an appropriate Emergency Management service and their belief a national Unit supporting local authorities would provide the most effective form of service delivery. This reflects the differing levels of support expressed by professional bodies, academics and professionals in relation to national involvement in the delivery of a local service, where some would like to see a national body offering appropriate support and guidance (Parker, April 1991, Cunningham, May 2001, E.P.S., October 2001) whilst others believe this would remove the ability of local authorities to cater for local needs (Jones, 1997, Bennett and Cirell, January 2000). Significant associations existed between stakeholders believing the public needed a voice in pre-planning for emergencies and their confidence in community awareness of Emergency Management services. In contrast, no association was found between stakeholder opinion regarding the role of the public in responding to an emergency and their perception an Emergency Management service is provided reflecting community needs. These last two findings confirm the differing options held between practitioners and academics in relation to the potential role of the public with the delivery of an Emergency Management service, where some interested parties believe the public should have an input into pre-planning for emergencies and recognise the public do already play a role in responding to an emergency (McIntosh, 1989, Clwyd County Council, 1993, Cox et al., 1995) while Llwyn (1998) stated there has long been a tradition in the U.K. to exclude the public from Emergency

Management as they are seen as “*an impediment or an obstacle*” in the recovery process.

The findings from the stakeholder census provided a unique insight into the relationships between various factors that influence the delivery of this provision. These findings were used alongside the ‘Four Cs’ as a structure to evaluate the effectiveness of local authorities specifically implementing ISO9000, Charter Mark, I.I.P. and the Excellence Model as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review. This evaluation considered to what extent the use of each existing quality management tool would result in the achievement of Best Value principles in all aspects of an Emergency Management service. The evaluation, as described in-depth in Chapter Seven, found none of these quality management tools in isolation would have ensured the robust application of all the ‘Four Cs’ of Best Value in the Emergency Management service. McAdam et al. (2002) and the Cabinet Office (2001) both suggested in order to improve services as much as possible a combination of existing quality management tools could be implemented whereby the limitations of one are off-set by the strengths of another. However, this approach was not considered the most effective way to achieve Best Value within local authority Emergency Management provision when considering the current level of resources available both in terms of costs and personnel time. For this reason, a support model was developed with the intention of assisting Emergency Management Best Value Review teams in conducting comprehensive and robust Reviews of their existing service.

## Findings From Follow-Up Interviews and Best Value Review Support Model

### Evaluation Stage One:

A series of six one-to-one interviews were held in late 2001 to early 2002 with a selection of stakeholders with first-hand experience of Emergency Management Best Value Review implementation. These interviews identified stakeholders perceptions of Best Value and provided an opportunity for initial model evaluation. These findings indicated ‘challenge’ and ‘compare’ had been the most valuable aspects of a Review, whilst the least valuable aspects were those that related to the difficulties of tackling a new process, e.g. lack of specialist skills, constant revision of overarching guidance, time needed to deal with the unknown and learning new processes.

‘Challenge’ had been considered the easiest ‘C’ to apply to Emergency Management which contrasts with the findings from Warwick University who reported the majority of English Best Value pilot authorities had conducted insufficient challenge (Sparke, 2000). Interviewees perceived ‘compete’ had been the most difficult ‘C’ to implement due to the limited number of alternative service providers. Similarly, Warwick University had reported that many of the Best Value pilots had opted to give in-house teams the opportunity to improve and only use open competition when they had been unable to meet targets for improvement which suggests local authority services overall find the ‘compete’ aspect of Best Value difficult to implement (Sparke, 2000). All Emergency Management Reviews had been labour intensive and a number of respondents suggested their departments had found it difficult to both respond to emergencies and meet reporting deadlines. The majority of pilot authorities in England and Wales had found Best Value to be a greater challenge than they expected as well as demanding a significantly higher level of resources than first

anticipated (Sparke, 2000, Cardiff University Business School, February 2000). The majority of interviewees had found their Emergency Management services had improved since completing a Best Value Review, indeed most perceptions of Best Value in Emergency Management had changed since undertaking an actual Review as they were now witnessing service improvements. Again, this finding mirrors those of Warwick and Cardiff Universities who reported “*Best Value was proving to be a major opportunity*” and “*Officers and Members believe Best Value is better than C.C.T.*” respectively (Sparke, 2000, Cardiff University Business School, February 2000). However, interviewees had found it had not been possible to address all weaknesses identified during a Review process. Similar limitations had been identified by the two monitoring Universities: “*councils increasingly concentrated their efforts on the areas which would provide the most results*” (Jameson, February 2001) and “*efforts should shift from processes to action that will improve service*” (Jameson, April 2000). The findings obtained from the interviews suggest those involved in Emergency Management Best Value Reviews had similar experiences to those reported by pilot authorities. During the interviews, the issue of inspection of Best Value Reviews was also discussed. Light touch inspections by the Best Value Inspectorate had been considered to be demoralising as they did not reflect the work undertaken to complete a Review. This finding suggests there is support for those who have expressed the view inspections are not always the most appropriate way to ensure service improvement (Coen, June 2000) and more specific criticisms aimed towards the Best Value Inspectorate (Burton, May 2001, Calpin, May 2001, Guyoncourt, September 2001).

The findings from these interviewees were used to positively influence the support model's development and reflect the perception of the majority of interviewees that future Emergency Management Best Value Reviews would be conducted differently as Best Value. Interviewees were able to identify the model's strengths and limitations by applying their own experiences to it. Several strengths were identified. The model was considered to clearly display the full scope of the local authority Emergency Management service including managerial activities in much greater detail than in any existing literature (Home Office, 1997). Indeed, the interviewees considered the model provided a good starting point for Emergency Management Best Value Review teams and that its implementation would save valuable time at the start of a Review as issues for investigation are clearly identified. It was felt the support model explained many of the 'grey' areas of Best Value bringing together a range of general guidance into one specific tool focussing specifically upon Emergency Management in a format that is very easy to understand and could be used as an example of best practice and applied to other local authority services. The interviewees considered the support model could be used as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review regardless of an authority's structure, corporate approach to Best Value, method of service funding or level of public understanding. Several limitations within the support model were identified. The majority of interviewees considered the middle tier contained too much text and could discourage potential users from using it. Similarly, to assist users there was a need for greater linkage and cross referencing between the differing tiers of the model. Several interviewees commented the model needed to be adapted so as to be more applicable for usage during a cross-cutting Best Value Reviews so all local authority departments can appreciate and scrutinise their input into an Emergency Management service's

delivery. In contrast, the remaining limitations related to the fine tuning of the model rather than major revision.

#### Findings From Best Value Review Support Model Evaluation Stage Two

Once the model had been revised and strengthened to reflect the comments made by one-to-one interviewees, it was evaluated again with members of the E.P.S.'s Local Authorities Professional Issues Group. From the Emergency Management stakeholder census, five issues were identified as perceived benefits of implementing Best Value within Emergency Management. The support model was developed with the aim of ensuring these benefits could be upheld. All respondents from the E.P.S. Local Authorities Professional Issues Group considered the model would help to improve the quality of the Emergency Management service, thereby confirming the views of interviewees who participated in the first stage of the model's evaluation. The majority of stage two respondents also felt the model would assist Review teams in developing partnerships within the service. Considering these last two findings together, suggests many Emergency Management practitioners feel the service can be improved by greater use of mutual aid whereby differing responding organisations work more closely and share resources wherever possible. The third perceived benefit related to raising the professionalism of the service and the majority of respondents felt the model would help to achieve this. This finding supported the views expressed by the majority of stage one participants, that if the model had been available for them to use during their own recent Review a more comprehensive Review would have taken place, thereby raising the professionalism of the service. The Emergency Management stakeholders who participated in the census hoped Best



Value would provide the opportunity for continuous improvement within the provision and the majority of evaluation respondents felt the model's implementation as part of a Review would help to achieve this. The first stage of support model evaluation revealed reference to continuous improvement, a key requirement of Best Value (Corrigan et al., 1999), was implied but not explicitly stated. However, this finding from the second stage in the evaluation process confirms this original limitation has now been overcome although a minority of respondents felt the model could either only help in part or not help at all in ensuring continuous improvement within the service. This perhaps suggests many respondents support the various pleas made by, amongst others, the E.P.S. (October 2001), the L.G.A. (Sidaway, February 1999, L.G.A., February 2002) plus a mix of practitioners and academics (London Emergency Planning Information Centre, March 1990, Parker, April 1991, Brook, July 1991, Crainer, 1993, Quarantelli, 1997, Llewelyn, 1998, McLean and Johnes, 2000, Turner, October 2000, Cunningham, March 2002, House Of Commons, April 2002, Cunningham, May 2001, House Of Commons, July 2002, Wheal, 2002, Cunningham, February 2003) for a radical overhaul of the basis which underpins this service in order for it to improve. The final perceived benefit of Best Value implementation was that of providing a service capable of responding to the needs of the public. Most of the respondents in this second stage of the model's evaluation considered that the model would help to achieve this, suggesting the model has successfully incorporated those various suggestions identified during the literature review (Broughton, 1998, Hennessey, 1998, E.P.S., October 2001).

Analysis of the census data also identified six factors perceived to potentially constrain the achievement of effective Best Value implementation. Respondents from

the Professional Interest Group were asked to consider to what extent the support model would help users to overcome these potential constraints. Respondents considered the model would help to overcome Emergency Management professionals not fully understanding the requirements of Best Value. This finding mirrors those positive comments expressed by stage one evaluation interviewees when they considered the model comprehensively applies Best Value principles fully to the Emergency Management service and does so in an easy to understand way whilst clearly identifying the issues for a Review team to investigate and answer. Most stage two respondents also considered the model could help Best Value Review teams to overcome the inconsistent working boundaries currently used to deliver the service. Two respondents did not feel the model would help to overcome the issue of working boundaries. This perhaps provides strength to the calls by Parker (April 1991) and Cunningham (May 2001) for consideration to be given to wide-area issues. None of the interviewees who participated in the first evaluation exercise considered working boundaries would impact upon the usage of this model as part of an actual Review. The current lack of national quality standards within the Emergency Management service was identified as another potential constraint upon compliance with Best Value requirements. Most stage one participants felt the model would have been beneficial had it been available for them to use during their own recent Review as it highlights areas for appropriate comparison. Indeed, many of those who participated in stage one commented their Review teams had identified their own areas for comparison (many of which were different). They had then collected and analysed this data appropriately showing that Filkin's (June 1999) concern discussed in Chapter Four has become a reality within local authority Emergency Management as substantial data collection and comparison is being undertaken at local level without

consistency between the authorities or a steer from central government to support this. However, this is currently unavoidable due to the lack of any centrally collected data incorporating appropriate information from the private and voluntary sectors. This adds support to Turner's (October 2000) call for there to be a controlled and structured national approach whereby information is shared and cross-referenced.

Lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public was another constraint identified by the census participants. Whilst five of the eleven respondents considered the model would help to overcome this constraint, four respondents felt it would only help in part with another two respondents considering that it would not help at all. When considering these findings alongside Lavelle's (1994) four stages of the public's perception of risk, as well as McLean and Johnes' (2000) opinion that when emergencies occur, the public then expect procedures to be put in place to ensure the situation will not occur again. This suggests the issue of rectifying the public's current lack of understanding surrounding local authority Emergency Management will require much greater consideration than is possible as part of a Best Value Review. Lack of specific service legislation was another constraining factor highlighted by census respondents, and for this reason, the model was developed to clearly display the full extent of the Emergency Management provision. Whilst the majority of respondents felt the model would help to ensure a robust Best Value Review was conducted, despite this lack of legislation, several concerns were expressed by remaining respondents indicating the model would only help either in part or not at all. This suggests the support model has achieved as much as is possible by clearly defining the service, but that the issue of legislation can only be resolved at a national level by central government hence calls by various practitioners, professional bodies and academics for new legislation to be enacted (Parker, April

1991, Cunningham, May 2001, E.P.S., October 2001, Cabinet Office, February 2002, Wheal, 2002). These last two findings appear to support the argument of the Disasters Working Group (1991) that it is only when new legislation is enacted that Emergency Management will assume a higher level of preparedness automatically raising the profile, quality and priority assigned to the function. The issue of decreasing Civil Defence Grant was the final perceived constraint to be identified. In a similar vein to the previous findings, whilst five of the eleven respondents believed the model would help an Emergency Management Best Value Review team undertake a Best Value Review regardless of decreasing Grant levels, two respondents considered the model would only help in part while the remaining four considered it would not help at all. This suggests it is possible to implement the model as part of a Best Value Review and it will diagnose those issues associated with decreasing funding as identified during the literature review (Parker, April 1991, Bye and Horner, 1998, Vary, 2000, Cunningham, May 2001). However, the support model will not be able to provide the solutions to these issues as this can only be resolved at a central government level, hence justifying recent pleas by the E.P.S. (Ward, November 2000, E.P.S., October 2001, House Of Commons, April 2002) and L.G.A. (Sidaway, February 1999, L.G.A., February 2002) for such assistance.

Findings from the Professional Interest Group participants also revealed all respondents considered the support model fully applied all five 'Cs' of Best Value to the Emergency Management service.

From this evaluation the majority of participants confirmed they would expect issues identified in the census to influence both current and future Emergency Management

delivery; Civil Defence Grant status, in-house financial contribution being made towards the service, consistency of service delivery across the U.K., the need for emergency arrangements to be capable of dovetailing across the U.K., local authority structure, Emergency Management service integration into an authority's corporate aims and objectives, level of Chief Officer support for the service, support for a dedicated national Inspectorate, support for national performance indicators, confidence in providing a service that reflects local community needs, confidence in community awareness of the service and the belief that public understanding of Emergency Plans would increase their effectiveness. The respondents from the Professional Issues Group were asked to indicate to what extent the model could be successfully implemented as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review, regardless of the status of those factors identified as influencing service delivery. All respondents considered the model could be implemented even though there was support for the establishment of a national Inspectorate. This suggests whilst respondents understand a Best Value Review is conducted locally, they would like to see a national body overseeing the service. This gives strength to the arguments made for improved national Emergency Management guidance (London Emergency Planning Information Centre, March 1990, Parker, April 1991, Llewelyn, 1998, Cunningham, May 2001, E.P.S., October 2001, Cunningham, March 2002) and the establishment of inspections of local authority provision (Parke,r April 1991, Cunningham, May 2001, E.P.S., October 2001). Whilst Coen (June 2000) believes inspections in general do not develop new ways of thinking or result in innovative solutions that meet local needs, the findings from the second stage of evaluation support O'Brien's view of inspection in that it provides an independent analysis of the progress being made within a service, and in turn, can influence the quality of services

delivered (Edwards, June 2000). Similarly, all respondents expressed the view the model could be implemented despite the current lack of national service performance indicators. Once again, this suggests whilst local authorities have accepted they must endeavour to compare their Emergency Management services during Best Value Review (E.P.S., October 2000), they would prefer performance indicators to be introduced nationally. This interpretation appears in-line with views expressed by those who would like to see the introduction of such performance indicators and those who have criticised central government's existing "National Standards Of Emergency Planning For England And Wales Document" (Cunningham, March 2002). Most respondents considered the support model could adopted during a Review regardless of an authority's structure, thereby confirming the findings obtained during the first stage of evaluation. The majority of evaluation participants considered model usage was also possible despite the perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the U.K.. Similarly, most felt implementation of the model was feasible despite the perceived need for consistency of Emergency Management service delivery across the U.K.. The last two findings appear to suggest many evaluation respondents would like to see standardised and comparable approaches being recommended at a national level which local authorities can then consider and adapt most appropriately to best suit their own local circumstances. The Best Value Review support model was considered to be usable despite the level of Chief Officer support given to the service or the level of service integration into corporate aims and objectives. These findings can perhaps be explained by the fact that as the model clearly stipulates all the areas requiring investigation during an Emergency Management Best Value Review then neither Chief Officer support nor level of integration into corporate aims should influence how the Review is conducted.

Similarly, those who participated in evaluation considered the support model was workable within a Best Value Review process regardless of the status of the three main influences relating to the public; the perception an Emergency Management service is provided which reflects local community needs, the level of confidence in the local community being aware of the service and the belief Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public. Many of the participants in the first stage of evaluation explained their own recent Review had not included any public consultation. Several found this had been criticised by the Best Value Inspectorate. However, stage one participants felt the support model would have assisted them in this area of Review and the findings obtained from the second stage of the evaluation process appear to confirm the model's potential in this area to fulfil those hopes held by Corrigan et al. (1999) and Newman (October 2000) that rising public expectations can be met by genuinely involving service users and communities in decision making. The final two influencing factors related to the funding of an Emergency Management service; first, the making of an in-house financial contribution and secondly, a local authority's Civil Defence Grant status. Once again, the majority of respondents considered model implementation was possible regardless of the status of both these factors thereby suggesting whilst funding has a big impact upon service provision the model can assist in diagnosing areas of concern that could provide greater strength to the arguments presented by both the E.P.S. (E.P.S., October 2001, House Of Commons, April 2002) and L.G.A. (Sidaway, February 1999, L.G.A., February 2002) for extra funding or alternatively could find more innovative ways of providing the service without requiring an automatic increase in resources (Corrigan et al., 1999) such as the E.P.S.'s suggestion of "exploring other means of generating additional income" (E.P.S., October 2000).

However, Warwick University Business School found Best Value could not result in the rapid service improvements sought by the government without local authorities devoting additional resources to the process and this may be difficult for Emergency Management services to do.

To conclude, the Best Value Review support model developed during this research portrays the complete process of applying Best Value to the Emergency Management service and has the potential to be implemented to ensure an objective Best Value Review takes place irrespective of differences in funding, structure, geographical location and working boundaries. Whilst the model will flag the constraints of quality standards (including measuring and monitoring), legislation and funding, all of these issues are outside the control of individual local authorities. This effectively means the support model has built upon the positive perceptions of Best Value and will help to some extent to overcome those negative stakeholder perceptions of Best Value. Participants in both evaluation stages considered the model greatly improved upon existing documentation detailing the application of Best Value to Emergency Management. This research has produced a unique tool aimed at assisting local authorities in implementing effective Emergency Management Best Value Reviews. It is now important to discuss the relative strengths and limitations of this entire research process.

#### Strengths Of The Research Process:

A key strength of this research process was its uniqueness in the application of Best Value to local authority Emergency Management provision. This process involved



interpreting a wealth of Best Value literature alongside a small body of Emergency Management literature in order to commence determining the most appropriate process for mainland U.K. local authorities to adopt in order to implement comprehensive and objective Best Value Reviews of their entire Emergency Management services. This research was enhanced, though not biased, by having a complementary practitioner-researcher focus throughout. Practitioner knowledge did greatly assist the identification of the activities undertaken in order to perform a local authority Emergency Management service as well as the identification of suitable stakeholders. However, this knowledge alone would have resulted in a support model being biased towards the experiences and working practices of the practitioner's local authorities. Only by undertaking the research described in this thesis could those issues considered nation-wide as influencing service delivery as well as the potential benefits and constraints perceived by stakeholders of subjecting this service to a Review be identified. These research findings ensured the support model subsequently developed represented not the practitioner's Emergency Management service but the entire U.K. local authority Emergency Management provision.

The first ever census of English, Scottish and Welsh local authority Emergency Management stakeholders was conducted in order to identify their perceptions. From this, it was possible to identify the factors that potentially influence both current and future service delivery as well as the perceived benefits and constraints in implementing effective Emergency Management Best Value Reviews. This census resulted in the identification of a number of perceptions from each group of Emergency Management stakeholders. A body of knowledge pertaining to their perceptions of the Emergency Management provision and Best Value process was

identified that allowed existing quality management tools to be evaluated in order to determine to what extent they would assist local authorities in achieving robust Reviews of their Emergency Management provision. Whilst evaluation revealed none of the existing models in isolation or combination would help to effectively achieve a comprehensive Review specific to Emergency Management, the data obtained from the census assisted in the development of a Best Value Review support model as a diagnostic tool with the specific purpose of assisting local authorities in implementing effective Reviews of their Emergency Management services.

A multi-method research approach was used to ensure the Emergency Management stakeholder census data was triangulated to further test and provide insight into the key findings. The series of interviews with professionals who had recently participated in actual Emergency Management Best Value Reviews allowed ‘live’ experiences to be incorporated into the model prior to second stage evaluation with Emergency Management Officers who represented local authority Emergency Management on a nationally recognised E.P.S. professional interest group. The development of a support model to facilitate effective Best Value Reviews and subsequent evaluation exercises have resulted in the production of a unique tool based upon the perceptions and experiences of people working within the area of local authority Emergency Management provision. This research has identified many dynamic and complex issues that appear to influence the delivery of a local authority’s Emergency Management service, issues that were not evident prior to this research. The identification of these issues confirms the decision made at the start of this research regarding the importance of seeking the perceptions of all stakeholders involved in delivering a local authority Emergency Management service. Evaluation

of the prototype has strongly suggested this research process has produced a model that can assist local authorities in conducting comprehensive and robust Emergency Management Best Value Reviews.

#### Limitations Of The Research Process:

It is possible to identify several limitations from this research process. Whilst the census undertaken at the start of this research did provide a representative overview of the perceptions held by all types of Emergency Management stakeholder it did not provide as detailed an insight into the perceptions of Chief Executives, Best Value Managers and Elected Members as it did for Emergency Management professionals. Indeed, some stakeholders replied their local authority would no longer allow them to complete the questionnaire as a policy of only completing statutory returns had been introduced as a direct attempt to improve the use of personnel time. This suggests in future research, it may become more difficult to elicit high response rates from this type of data collection mechanism within local authorities. Similarly, these concerns over time and access to local authority personnel meant it was neither possible to pilot the prototype in 'live' conditions nor present the support model directly to E.P.S. Professional Interest Group members in order to gain direct feedback from them. However, the Best Value Review support model evaluation findings obtained suggest the methodology adopted during this research has to a great extent effectively overcome these identified limitations.

### Suggestions For Further Research:

Future researchers may wish to consider piloting the support model during an actual local authority Emergency Management Best Value Review, as a form of participatory action research within a 'live' scenario. This approach would build upon the research presented in this thesis by allowing future researchers to analyse the narrative responses received to the questions asked in the model to then make an assessment of how these results could help a local authority to improve its service Emergency Management service delivery. The findings obtained from this approach build upon the body of knowledge presented in this thesis and would allow future researchers to go a stage further by focussing upon the 'real' rather than the 'theoretical' problems encountered in local authority Emergency Management in order to assess their impact upon the application of the model (Abraham, 1997). Piloting the support model in this way would allow researchers to scrutinise and assess whether the questions contained in the model were challenging enough to elicit the required critical and reflective responses needed to diagnose remedial action to ensure all aspects of subsequent service delivery improved. This type of approach would arguably support Rapoport's (1970) belief action research can reflect the objectives of social science while also giving regard to the concerns of practitioners operating directly within the Emergency Management setting. This technique would also determine the extent to which the model is compatible and can interface with local authority corporate Best Value strategies. Piloting the support model in this collaborative way could potentially result in direct feedback from service stakeholders thereby providing an insight into any implementation and usage problems from which options for solution could be identified to the benefit of both researchers and users

(Hult and Lennung, 1980). The issue of integration (or compatibility with local authority corporate approaches) can be effectively explored via ‘real life’ piloting to reflect Rawlington’s (September 2000) concern it is not possible to ensure continuous service improvement without first having some form of review process and that if such a process was “*rather cumbersome*”, then it was the responsibility of the local authority, or in this instance the researcher with the assistance of the local authority, to refine it. Ultimately for the future piloting of this model to be effective, it should follow Master’s (1995) “*cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting*” by including direct interface with a representative sample of Emergency Management Best Value Review teams and through their full collaboration and co-operation determine the suitability of the model as a diagnostic tool in an actual Review setting. As the area of Best Value continues to evolve and the provision of local authority Emergency Management is currently under national review, Dick (1993) considers participatory action research is most suitable for such ambiguous situations and confirms Perry and Zuber-Skerrit’s (1992) concerns that “*much traditional management research is of ‘dubious relevance to managers’ and has little impact (direct or indirect) on managerial practice*” hence their belief action research “*can address this problem of relevance and impact, because it emphasises both action and research*”.

Future research may also wish to consider investigating the potential of the Best Value Review support model’s usage in assisting benchmarking within local authority Emergency Management provision. This provision would not only allow the identification of good practice but would also help to measure the extent to which Best Value is being achieved within local authority Emergency Management

provision through comparison with exemplar local authority Emergency Management providers . The research presented in this thesis has already highlighted the current lack of national performance indicators within Emergency Management and the fact a number of local authorities have established ad hoc benchmarking clubs with similar authorities in order to compare their services in the absence of any central provision. Future research, however, could endeavour to undertake a national Emergency Management benchmarking exercise using the model as a basis thereby working in-line with the earlier recommendation by Filkin (June 1999) that comparison should be enhanced by a central collection of the relevant data. Such an exercise could also incorporate those concerns expressed by Turner (October 2000), Llewelyn (1998) and McLean and Johnes (2000) that experiences and lessons learned gained during periods of responding to an emergency are currently not shared amongst Emergency Management professionals due to the lack of supporting mechanisms for disseminating the findings across the U.K. Emergency Management services. They also consider it to be essential that there is a shift in culture within Emergency Management from being reactive to proactive.

Benchmarking is a recognised process of continuous learning and adaptation in order to improve the functioning of an organisation (Watson, 1993, Camp, 1995). Indeed, part of this suggested future research could evaluate the suitability of those numerous local performance indicators devised by various benchmarking clubs around the country, for example those contained in Appendix F. As recognised by Zairi (1996), benchmarking offers the opportunity to focus externally in order to identify opportunities open to an organisation as well as counteract any potential threats. The purpose of this benchmarking exercise should not be to merely be able to locate local

authority Emergency Management provision within a league table as has often been the case with public sector benchmarking, where greater focus has been placed upon results rather than the processes that achieve those results, but to ensure real service improvement (Holloway, December 1998). Ultimately, this type of research could see benchmarking preventing local authorities from becoming complacent regarding Emergency Management provision by acting as a change agent and instilling a culture of continuous learning. This would impact upon behaviour modification, develop new ways of managing, instigate a more appropriate discipline for considering processes and focussing upon customer needs. However, such research would need to overcome those issues perceived by Bendell et al. (1998) as being problematic within public sector benchmarking. They consider within the public sector culture, there is a traditional lack of individual ownership, responsibility, client care and staff empowerment, bureaucratic and non-responsive systems, lack of clarity regarding multiple customers and stakeholders involved in even single transactions, political as opposed to market determined, scale and complexity associated with large, centralised organisations. Ultimately, a benchmarking exercise of this nature would provide future researchers with data upon which to measure the extent to which Best Value is being achieved within Emergency Management provision across the U.K., something which is currently not possible due to the previously discussed lack of national performance data collection and assessment.

This research has highlighted the current status of performance measurement, legislation and funding remain as constraints upon the delivery of local authority Emergency Management services. Indeed, whilst the support model will assist Best Value Review teams to try and overcome these issues, they can only be resolved in

entirety through policies implemented at a national level by central government. At the time of research completion, the Cabinet Office were soon to present a first draft of the proposed Civil Contingencies Bill to members of the E.P.S. at their annual national conference ([www.emergplansoc](http://www.emergplansoc), May 2003). In addition, the Audit Commission were also considering the issues of inspection and performance indicators potentially similar to those found in their library of performance indicators, i.e. 'off-the-shelf' self-assessment indicators that authorities can voluntarily select and use to suit their local circumstances ([www.local-pi-library](http://www.local-pi-library), 2003). Similarly, the E.P.S. (Ward, November 2000, E.P.S., October 2001, House Of Commons, April 2003) and the L.G.A. (Sidaway, February 1999, L.G.A., February 2002, House Of Commons, April 2002) continue to lobby central government for extra funding towards the provision of local authority Emergency Management services. In light of the potential developments in the areas of service performance measurement, legislation and funding, it is suggested future researchers consider two areas of study; to pilot the Best Value Review support model in 'live' scenarios and use the model to develop benchmarks and tools for comparison in order to measure to what extent Best Value is being achieved within the service.



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## **APPENDIX A – THE BEST VALUE PILOT PROGRAMME**



Since April 1998, 38 Best Value pilot projects have been underway. These include projects run by 34 individual local authorities, 2 joint projects by local authorities, and 2 police authorities. In addition, there are also 6 pilot Partnership Networks. These are made up of authorities that are experimenting with various forms of partnership, particularly with the private sector.

#### The Best Value Pilots In England

##### **Birmingham City Council**

This project involves a comprehensive review focussed on: services for tenants, benefits service, services for older people and catering. All 4 areas were chosen because of their performance, issues arising from public consultation and their impact on each other. They centre on working across departmental and organisational boundaries. Together the projects represent 22% of the City Council's budget.

##### **Bradford City Council**

This pilot draws on one of the 5 priorities identified in their Community Plan, 'Fighting Crime for a Safer District'. The returns to the public consultation exercise mounted during the development of the Community Plan identified crime as a matter of public concern. The ten services selected for the pilot contribute to community safety, as well as providing a balanced approach to Best Value.

##### **Braintree District Council**

Braintree is using the opportunities provided by Best Value to completely revisit their approach to strategy formulation and service delivery. They are reviewing all their services in a 4 year cycle, making sure they address the community-based principles of Local Agenda 21, sustainability, quality and equality.

##### **London Borough of Brent**

Brent's pilot focuses on Kilburn, an area of social, economic and cultural diversity, which attracts SRB and URBAN funding and for which the authority is developing a local area strategy. Best Value is being pursued in the context of the cross boundary issues of social exclusion, community safety and regeneration. The services covered are: housing related services, refuse and cleansing services, highways enforcement, council benefits services and community safety issues.

##### **Brighton and Hove Council**

This whole authority pilot includes a 5 year review programme. The reviews aim to achieve improvements in service performance and cost reduction or containment, which reflect the priorities of the community. Brighton and Hove have mainstreamed Best Value through an approach to reviews which are managed departmentally, whilst retaining a corporate steer by member involvement and an officers' cross-departmental steering group.

##### **Bristol City Council**

This project contains 4 elements. The first is the development of the corporate framework for undertaking Best Value work in the authority. The second is the integration of the City Centre strategy with the Council's corporate priorities, particularly those relating to young and elderly people. The third project involves providing free community access to electronic information, building on the success of the Digital City Bristol initiative. The fourth examines the use of in-house transport provision and the options for rationalisation.

**London Borough of Camden**

This is an all-authority project, covering fifteen services in the first year. The services chosen for review were a mixture of in-house and externally provided services; good, bad and average. Each service in the pilot bid was expected to test itself against the 5 principles of Best Value for Camden.

**Carrick District Council**

Carrick's pilot covers all housing services. Housing was identified as a key service because of an acute shortage of affordable housing and a need for investment in public and private housing stocks.

**Cleveland Police Constabulary**

The pilot is based on a whole organisational approach, focused on how the Middlesbrough police district delivers front line services to the community and how such services are supported by the organisation. Middlesbrough district was chosen to permit comparison with the force as a whole and provides challenges in terms of delivering police services.

**Cumbria County Council**

This pilot focuses on issues of disability and mental health. The services covered are: residential facilities; supported housing; day care; home care; sheltered employment, and education. Cumbria Council developed a purchaser/provider split for the provision of care services, and the pilot project sought to apply the lessons learned to the complex area of disability and mental health.

**CWOIL (Cambridge, Welwyn Hatfield, Oxford, Ipswich and Lincoln)**

The CWOIL pilot is a collaborative project between five authorities, concentrating on housing and revenues services. The approach is based on benchmarking and continuous improvement. 12 specific service areas were identified for fundamental service reviews. The first year areas were homelessness, housing advice, repairs, local taxation, benefits and cashiers.

**Exeter City Council**

Exeter chose an area covering 6 of the 18 wards in the north of the city to pilot the project. Services covered are: housing, including housing benefits and private sector housing; environmental services, and social services including care in the community, community safety, health promotion and community facilities. The authority proposed to work in partnership with Devon County Council, North and East Devon Health Authority and Exeter Council for Voluntary Services.

**Gosport District Council**

As part of their Local Agenda 21 initiative, Gosport undertook a major consultation exercise. The 3 pilot projects: housing, building control and food safety were chosen because consultation identified the importance of the relationship between service users and the Council.

**Great Yarmouth Borough Council**

The Council developed a social strategy in partnership with Norfolk County Council, East Norfolk Health Authority and the local Association of Voluntary Organisations. The aim is to reduce current levels of social deprivation in Great Yarmouth. The Council chose to pilot services that contributed to this aim: 7 in housing, 2 in finance, planning, economic development, environmental health, amenities, leisure, recreation, welfare rights, refuse collection and street cleansing.

### **Greater Manchester Police**

The force decided to pilot its approach to Best Value in four inner city sub-divisions in Manchester and Salford. These were chosen as typical areas of the organisation which undertake a wide range of front line services. These services can be broadly divided into 5 main categories: crime management, traffic management, public reassurance and public order management, responding to and dealing with calls from the public, and community relations and community problem solving.

### **London Borough of Greenwich**

This pilot covered 8 services: advice and benefits, domiciliary care, early years services, education inspectorate and advice, housing repairs, libraries, property management and passenger transport. These provided a variety of service types, covered the majority of Council directorates, and presented a range of different problems and potential solutions. In terms of overall expenditure, these services amounted to some £60m.

### **London Borough of Harrow**

The Harrow pilot comprises 4 specific fundamental reviews path-finding a whole-authority approach to Best Value that aims to examine all functions over a 3 year period. The major pilots are: domiciliary care, special needs transport, education administration and financial services.

### **Ipswich Borough Council**

Ipswich embarked on a 5 year Best Value programme to review all council services. The first phase of the programme identified 20% of services, which form the pilot project. A number of criteria were used to select the services included in the pilot. The services are: tax and benefits; development control, building and design services, theatre and museums, Corporate Directors Team, town centre management, Town Hall and Corn Exchange, community safety, and transportation.

### **Leeds City Council**

The project focuses on the delivery of integrated services that meet local needs in the most efficient and effective way. It covers 2 contrasting wards in the south of the city, Middleton and Rothwell. The services proposed for review include some subject to C.C.T. and some provided directly. They are: advice and benefits, social services, training, street cleaning, community sport, grounds maintenance, libraries, housing, refuse collection, street lighting and highways maintenance.

### **London Borough of Lewisham**

Lewisham's bid has 3 main elements. The first, increasing accountability to residents and involving the community through a community plan, a new business panel and a Lewisham citizens panel. The second, introducing a new council-wide performance and quality system. The third, a strategic review of services during the 3 years of the pilot, representing more than 20% of the Council's budget. The major service areas reviewed in the first year of the project include education standards, housing benefits and housing company, passenger transport, community safety, leisure, environmental services, catering PFI, revenues, construction and property services.

### **Lincolnshire County Council**

The aim of this pilot is to build upon its established track record of securing alternative methods of service delivery. A corporate review of services was carried out to identify priority service areas for review. The priority services, being covered in year one of the pilot project represent 21% of the Council's budget; waste disposal, corporate parent and looked-after-children,

highways maintenance, student and school services, home care, community services, Fire Brigade services, and finance and resources.

#### **Manchester City Council**

Manchester's pilot aims to build sustainable communities in 3 localities with different characteristics. It identifies areas of improvement on which the Council wishes to concentrate: physical environment, educational standards, parenting skills and family support, vandalism, disorder, crime and fear of crime. The focus is on early, preventive intervention and on cross-service improvements across departmental and agency boundaries.

#### **Newark and Sherwood District Council**

Following a corporate organisational review, the Council submitted a Best Value bid comprising a mixture of internal and external services. These were: revenues, benefits, legal, housing, information technology and environmental and direct services. The objectives of the programme are: to encourage active citizenship, to continuously improve customer service, and to demonstrate innovation in local governance.

#### **City of Newcastle-upon-Tyne**

Newcastle has a twin track approach to Best Value. The first, is the development of a corporate framework for Best Value. The second, consists of two pilot projects: integrated environmental services and Council Tax collection. The Council's overall aims are to improve services, reduce costs where possible and to bring about a democratic revival and real meaning to the involvement of local people in their services.

#### **London Borough of Newham**

Newham proposed all the authority's services would be reviewed over the 3 years of the pilot programme, with 27 services being considered within the first year. They aimed to achieve cost savings, improve service quality levels and increase externally supplied services. This was an ambitious and wide ranging bid from an authority located in an area confronted by formidable problems of social and economic deprivation. The breadth of the programme provided a challenge to the authority's capacity to undertake a large volume of reviews within a tight timetable.

#### **Northamptonshire County Council**

The overall strategy for the pilot stems from the review of the Council structure and management processes and is based on the implementation of a performance plan. The pilot bid comprises 4 service areas from each major department: highways and transportation, residential care for the elderly, waste management and youth services.

#### **Oldham MBC**

Oldham's project is aimed at improving the quality of life within the Chadderton area of the Borough by providing residents with improved services and the opportunity to influence those services. It seeks to integrate the services of housing management, buildings maintenance, grounds maintenance, highways and street lighting, refuse collection and street cleaning.

#### **Portsmouth City Council**

Portsmouth has selected 8 projects for review, on the basis of 4 residents surveys backed up by community consultation meetings. They are: reducing high levels of school exclusion, providing a better service for pupils with learning difficulties, responding to concern about crime and the safety of parks, improving support for young people leaving care, obtaining better value for

money in residential care, improving job prospects through economic development, enhancing partnerships with the private sector and achieving value for money in asset management.

#### **Reading Council**

The purpose of Reading's pilot is to examine how working in partnership can improve the range and quality of services available to the public. Reading proposed to: develop a mechanism to improve service delivery in partnerships, develop a wider range of partnerships and publish a guide to partnership opportunities.

#### **Redcar and Cleveland Council**

This pilot covers all the services provided by the authority, but incorporates 5 individual projects. These are: a training and development initiative, a local estates service initiative, the Occupational Therapy Service project, a Council Tax collection project and a housing/council tax benefit joint service delivery project. The local estates service initiative is a multi-agency scheme, targeted at Grangetown, aimed at developing a model for service delivery with direct community and stakeholder involvement.

#### **Southampton City Council**

The Council's Best Value pilot concentrates on the quality of life facing older people and how it could be improved by joint action within the city. It was devised in partnership with a range of organisations within the city and focused on the needs of the more vulnerable members of the older population. 3 initiatives to be explored in the first year were: a crisis prevention and support scheme, 'night watch' services for older people at night, and a 'Home Safe' package to enable vulnerable old people to remain at home. Housing services play a key part in all these projects.

#### **South Norfolk District Council**

South Norfolk chose to review services that contribute to the authority's aim to tackle social exclusion: increasing employment opportunities, sustaining rural community viability, housing and leisure for all, welfare rights and rural transport.

#### **Sunderland City Council**

Sunderland's pilot involves 60 young people moving from social exclusion to inclusion in the world of work through a structured programme of real work experience, vocational training and personal development. The pilot is testing service provision in youth justice, after care, housing, leisure, adult education, youth and personnel services.

#### **Surrey County Council**

Surrey's pilot has 4 elements: community profiling, community planning, community commissioning and community indicators. These processes involve the authority working jointly with the community in identifying service needs, planning, commissioning and monitoring services. Community Co-ordinators and Community Service managers have been appointed to identify and co-ordinate local needs and priorities. The bid focuses on Epsom and Ewell and on 3 services: library, adult education and youth services, which are being integrated with a community focus.

#### **Tandridge and Wealden Councils**

These councils joined together to deliver Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing and Council Tax Benefits as a consortium. The partners argued, if joint working in Council Tax and Benefit processing could deliver efficiencies of scale, the national savings could be significant.

**Warwickshire County Council**

The pilot programme covers all services and aims to secure across-the-board benefits by a comprehensive regime of performance management and continuous improvement. All services are being reviewed and improved every year. The involvement of customers, citizens and other stakeholders is being increased.

**Watford District Council**

The pilot seeks to illustrate a comprehensive strategic process that applies to all elements of the Council's activities. It includes: community planning, ethical procurement, delivery partnerships, organisational development, performance management and policy-led resource allocation. The service areas cover: keeping the town clean and recycling, traffic congestion, building and development control, environmental health, Housing and Council Tax Benefits youth services and improving the quality of life in Leavesden Green.

**City of York**

The aim of the pilot is to generate savings, improve services and working with other public and private organisations. The services covered in the bid are: street lighting, school meals, commercial waste, libraries, personnel and payroll, independent living, transport procurement, and leisure services.

**Best Value Partnership Network Pilots****Crossing The Boundaries**

This is a partnership between 5 County Trading Standards Departments: Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. The partnership's main objectives are to optimise resources, share best practice, and ensure measurable improvements in the quality and standards of the service.

**Institution of Civil Engineers Best Value Taskforce**

This has been formed to achieve two main objectives. First, to provide an opportunity for public and private sector organisations to meet in a non-confrontational environment to discuss and develop best practice guidance for the 'Built Environment' and secondly, to publish a definitive guide to best practice in advancing Best Value in the Built Environment. The Institute of Civil Engineers (I.C.E.) instigated the partnership in March 1998, with 25 public sector organisations and 12 private sector organisations. Due to the wide publicity it has grown in membership to a total of 64 organisations. The partners have all signed an agreement to openly share information, compare experiences and practices, explore alternative approaches, and work constructively for the development of the guide and the network.

**North Yorkshire Audit Partnership**

This partnership is also referred to as NYAP. It involves Scarborough Borough Council, Selby and Ryedale District Councils and most recently the City of York. The partnership was initiated in the summer of 1998 as a result of problems with the retention and recruitment of internal audit staff at Selby and Ryedale District Councils. The 3 authorities have adopted a separate contractor unit comprising of internal audit staff from each authority and provides internal audit services to each. The main objectives of the partnership include providing economies-of-scale as well as improvements in service quality and performance.

**Payroll Partnership Network**

This partnership involves Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Bristol City Council was also involved, during the initial stages but withdrew in March 1999. The partnership

developed in order to explore the opportunities available for jointly outsourcing payroll services and achieve reductions in costs through productivity savings. Following Bristol's departure progress with the remaining authorities became slow owing to resource pressures on other considerations, such as the introduction of a millennium payroll system and the implementation of the fair funding regime in schools. After careful consideration both authorities have decided to put the Payroll Partnership on hold.

### **Public Sector plc**

Also known as PSP. This is a private sector led partnership that seeks to establish an alternative service delivery model that fills the gap between resources available to the local authority and the resources required to deliver the level and quality of services demanded, with resources from the private sector. There are three main elements to PSP; two pathfinder projects, one in the London Borough of Havering and the other at Portsmouth City Council and a third element that involves the testing of PSP in other service areas such as leisure, housing and home care.

### **The Hub**

This is an alternative model of service delivery for Council Tax, National Non-Domestic Rates, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit administration. ICL and Barony Consulting developed the concept, although Barony have since withdrawn. The Hub is designed to provide comprehensive service delivery for authorities through a jointly managed partnership between private sector organisations and local authorities. The concept requires the re-engineering of services allow local authorities to remain responsible for front-line engagement with customers whilst much of the work shifts to a call centre located in the administrative hub with only the highly complex enquiries being passed to 'experts'.

(D.E.T.R., 1999)

**APPENDIX B – EXAMPLES OF EMERGENCIES WHICH  
OCCURRED IN THE U.K. DURING THE 1980S**



<u>Date:</u>	<u>Emergency:</u>
December 1982	European Gateway ferry collided into sandbanks at Harwich (6 dead).
May 1984	Explosion at water treatment works receiving visitors at Abbeystead, Lancashire (17 dead plus others injured).
October 1984	Bomb explosion at The Grand Hotel, Brighton (5 dead, 32 injured).
May 1985	Bradford Football Club fire (56 dead and many injured).
June 1985	Explosion on Air India Boeing 747 which then crashed off Cork (327 people on board killed, 132 bodies recovered to Cork).
August 1985	Aircraft caught fire during take off at Manchester airport (55 dead, 81 injured).
September 1985	Riots in Handsworth, Birmingham (72 dead, 137 injured, property damaged).
September 1985	Riots in Brixton, London (over 200 arrests and property damaged).
October 1985	Riots in Brixton, London (over 50 casualties).
October 1985	Riots in Broadwater Farm, Tottenham (1 dead, over 250 injured, property damaged).
April 1986	Chernobyl nuclear reactor accident in the Ukraine resulting in radioactive particles being released across Europe.
March 1987	The Herald of Free Enterprise ferry capsized shortly after leaving Zeebrugge harbour in Belgium bound for Britain (193 dead, 194 injured).
August 1987	Lone gunman at Hungerford (16 dead, 16 injured).
October 1987	Hurricane force winds swept South East England following failure of Meteorological Office to forecast the storm accurately (over 200 dead, huge insurance payout for damage).
November 1987	Kings Cross Underground Tube Station fire (31 dead, 32 injured).
November 1987	Terrorist bombing in Enniskillin, Northern Ireland (11 dead and over 50 injured).
July 1988	Oil rig Piper Alpha exploded in the North Sea (167 dead, 62 injured).
July 1988	Aluminium sulphate tipped into wrong tank at the Lowermoore water treatment plant near Camelford (20,000 people affected with a range of short and possibly long term health effects).
August 1988	Terrorist bombing in Omagh in Northern Ireland (8 dead, 21 injured).
December 1988	Three trains collided near Clapham railway station in London (35 dead, 35 injured).
December 1988	Pan Am jet exploded over Lockerbie due to terrorist bomb (270 passengers and crew dead plus 11 Lockerbie residents, 5 injured).
January 1989	Aircraft crashes onto M1 motorway near Kegworth in Leicestershire (47 dead, 79 injured).
March 1989	Purley Rail crash (5 dead, 8 injured).
April 1989	Crowd crush at Hillsborough Football Stadium in Sheffield, Yorkshire (95 dead, 139 injured, 400 received hospital treatment).

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Emergency:</u>
August 1989	The Marchioness pleasure boat sank in the River Thames in London after colliding with another vessel (57 dead).
August 1989	Shell oil pipeline on Merseyside leaked causing major uncontrolled leakage of 156 tonnes of crude oil into Mersey estuary.

(Ayre, 1997)

**APPENDIX C – EXAMPLES OF EMERGENCIES WHICH  
OCCURRED IN THE U.K. DURING THE 1990S**

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Emergency:</u>
January 1990	Hurricane force storms affect Wales and West Country (45 dead).
January 1990	Greek cement freighter sinks in Isle of Wight channel (19 crew drowned).
January/February 1990	Flooding in Thames Valley, especially Maidenhead area (over 200 properties seriously flooded for over one week with large scale property damage).
March 1990	Sea wall at Towyn, North Wales breached by high tide storm surge. Warning issued late (6,500 people evacuated, large scale property damage, many evacuees still not returned to their homes many months after the event).
March 1990	Explosion and fire at Shell plant in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire (1 dead, 6 injured).
March 1990	Riot in Trafalgar Square, London over the poll tax (58 police personnel and 75 civilians injured).
April 1990	RAF surveillance plane crashes near Stornoway (10 dead).
May 1990	Tanker Rosebay spills 1,100 tonnes of oil off Cornwall coast (miles of coastline affected).
June 1990	IRA bomb blast at Carlton Club, London (20 injured).
August 1990	Cloud of phosphorous pentoxide from fire at Albright and Wilson chemical plant smothers town of Portishead, Bristol.
August 1990	Tanker overturns at Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire spilling 30,000 litres of fuel into brook and drains.
November 1990	Telephone exchange fire at Scarborough, North Yorkshire robs 23,000 homes of services and knocks out public boxes.
December 1990	Severe weather in County Durham (200 people evacuated from snowbound cars on A66 in Bowes).
January 1991	Slow speed impact sends shock wave along a train at Cannon Street Station, London (2 dead, 265 injured).
February 1991	Floods up to 5 ft deep hit Boroughbridge high street, North Yorkshire (35 families evacuated).
February 1991	IRA bomb blast in the concourse at Victoria Station, London during rush hour (1 dead, 51 injured).
May 1991	Two tanks containing toxic chemicals washed ashore at Weybourne, Norfolk (150 people evacuated).
May 1991	Freight train carrying diesel, petrol and kerosene explodes after derailment at Bradford on Tone, Somerset.
October 1991	Spanish trawler sinks 200 miles west of Hebrides (16 crew dead).
October 1991	Toxic fumes sweep over Thetford, Norfolk (1000s warned to keep indoors).
December 1991	Two trains collide in Severn Tunnel (58 injured).
February 1991	Train hit lorry at level crossing at Dimmocks Cote, Cambridge (47 injured).
March 1992	18 inch gas main punctured on A46 in Leicester (100s evacuated).
April 1992	IRA bomb blasts city offices at St Mary Axe, London (3 dead).

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Emergency:</u>
June 1992	Nuclear power station evacuated after fire in reactor in Hunterston, Ayrshire.
August 1992	Explosion rocked Mobil gas reception point at St Fergus, Aberdeenshire.
September 1992	Accident at Hickson and Welch chemical plant in Castleford, West Yorkshire, fatal jet of flame erupting from distillation vessel (5 dead, 150 injured).
December 1992	Coal tip collapses and covers grounds of a comprehensive school in Tredegar, South Wales, six miles from Aberfan.
January 1993	45,000 tonne Liberian flagged bulk carrier Braer, en route from Norway to Canada, ran aground on rocks off Shetlands southern peninsula. 85,000 tonnes of light crude and 500 tonnes of bunker oil spillage (9 mile oil slick).
January 1993	Fear of fire from oil leak from BP Thistle platform in North Sea (80 evacuated).
January 1993	River Tay floods homes to depths of 6 feet in North Muirton, Tayside.
January 1993	35,000 tonne LPG tanker drifts helplessly in gale at Braeffoot Bay in Fife.
February 1993	North Sea accommodation barge breaks free in bad weather (400 oilmen evacuated).
March 1993	IRA bomb blasts Warrington town centre shopping mall (2 children dead, 16 seriously injured).
March 1993	Four teenagers drown on outward bound course as sea swamps canoes at Lyme Bay, Dorset.
April 1993	Terrorist bomb exploded in City of London in Bishopsgate (1 dead, 37 injured).
April 1993	Oil depot at North Shields blasted by IRA bomb.
May 1993	Department store fire in Chesterfield (2 dead, 34 injured).
May 1993	Executive jet slews off runway onto M27 at Eastleigh, Southampton (2 cars hit, 5 injured).
May 1993	RAF Hercules transporter crashes into mountain in Perthshire (9 crew dead).
June 1993	German tour bus collides with army truck on Bridge of Orchy, West Highlands (2 dead, 7 seriously injured).
June 1993	Half a mile of cliff and the Holbeck Hall Hotel, Scarborough slide into the North Sea.
June 1993	Severe flooding in North Wales and Cornwall.
July 1993	Two MiG fighters collide in mid-air in front of a 250,000 crowd at RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire.
August 1993	Roof falls in at Bilsthorpe mine in Nottinghamshire (3 miners dead).
September 1993	Publicity draws hundreds to watch demolition of towers in Glasgow (1 dead and 3 injured from flying debris).
September 1993	School bus collides with lorry in Wilberfoss, Yorkshire (driver dead, 58 children injured).
September 1993	Lorry pushes van into newsagents and two homes in Sowerby Brigde, West Yorkshire (6 dead, 6 injured).
November 1993	Coach crash on M2 in Faversham, Kent (9 American tourists and British driver dead, 36 injured).
November 1993	Minibus crashed into maintenance vehicle on M40 in Warwickshire (13 school children and 1 teacher dead).

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Emergency:</u>
November 1993	Power failure in London Underground (20,000 evacuated).
February 1994	Explosion and fire at chemical plant at Ellesmere Port, Cheshire.
April 1994	Steel gantry fell onto fun fair water chute ride at Porthcawl, North Wales (1 child dead).
June 1994	Chinook crashed into remote hillside on the Mull of Kintyre (29 dead including many security experts).
June 1994	Toxic chemical spill in warehouse at Gatwick Airport (45 injured).
July 1994	LPG lorry crashes causing fire and explosions at Appleby in Cumbria (1 dead, 2 injured).
July 1994	Lightening strikes oil refinery causing explosions and fire at Pembroke, Dyfed (26 injured).
July 1994	Fire at Texaco refinery in Milford Haven, lasts 36 hours.
August 1994	Three CIMAH sites hit by simultaneous explosions at CATX, Avonmouth (1 dead, 1 injured).
August 1994	Runaway diesel train collides with InterCity train in Edinburgh (57 injured).
August 1994	Ise of Wight high streets hit by incendiary devices.
August 1994	Sally Star ferry stranded in Channel after fire breaks out in an engine (100 rescued).
September 1994	Walkway collapses as passengers board ferry at Ramsgate (6 dead, 7 injured).
October 1994	Two trains met head on in fog on single line stretch of track in Edenbridge, Kent (5 dead, 11 injured).
November 1994	Chemical fire at Blairgowrie, Perthshire (20 evacuated).
December 1994	Strathclyde Region flooding (between 2000-3000 people helped).
December 1994	Hundreds of gallons of diesel pollute 16 miles of Dee tributary in Clwyd which is the source of drinking water for 2 million people.
December 1994	Boeing 737 cargo plane crashed after hitting an electricity pylon as it came in to land at Coventry Airport (5 dead).
January 1995	Helicopter ditches after being hit by lightening in the North Sea (16 oilmen and 2 crew rescued).
April 1995	Half ton German bomb defused in Portland, Dorset (4000 evacuated).
May 1995	Coach swerves off M4 in Bristol (10 elderly British Legion members dead).
May 1995	Commuter plane crashes during thunderstorm shortly after take off from Dunkswick, North Yorkshire (12 dead).
June 1995	Burning wax from candle factory fire at Highbridge, Somerset, sets alight cars and blocks drains.
July 1995	Coach crashes on A40 in Raglan, Gwent (8 dead, 32 injured).
July 1995	Blocks of flats destroyed by gas explosion in Ilkeston, Derbyshire (1 dead, 5 injured).
September 1995	Fire on Golden Mile, Blackpool (60 families evacuated).

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Emergency:</u>
September 1995	Stena Challenger runs aground off Calais in the English Channel.
October 1995	Faulty light causes fire at BASF warehouse containing 10,000 tonnes of plastic chips at Wilton on Teesside.
December 1995	Riots in Brixton (3 buildings set alight, 50 other buildings damaged, 10 cars set alight).
December 1995	Days of heavy snowstorms wreaked havoc in northern Scotland and islands with drifts up to 14 feet in height (120,000 people affected, £30 million of damage to homes, 1000 stranded drivers).
February 1996	RN Harrier crashes in thick fog narrowly missing village of Churchstanton in Somerset (2 aircrew dead).
February 1996	IRA bomb blasts South Quay of Canary Wharf in London (2 dead, 100 injured, £100 million plus damage).
February 1996	150,000 tonnes of light crude oil spilt from the Sea Empress 2 miles from entrance to Milford Haven oilport in Dyfed after it ran aground off St Anne's Head.
February 1996	Tankers crash on A19 and spill highly toxic chemicals into nearby brook in Middlesbrough (A19 closed for 4 days).
February 1996	Bus blown apart in Wellington Street, London by IRA bomb.
February 1996	Bomb exploded in Dockland area of London.
March 1996	Shooting at Dunblane Primary School (17 dead, 17 injured).
June 1996	IRA bomb blasts through Arndale shopping centre in Manchester City Centre (220 injured, devastation affected hundreds of businesses, shops, hotels, 2 railway stations, bus stations, metro link rail system and some homes).
June 1996	Bat with rabies dies in East Sussex (3 people bitten – all had post exposure treatment).
July 1996	Stabbing at St Lukes Nursery, Wolverhampton.
August 1996	Watford train crash (1 dead, 68 injured).
August 1996	Flooding in Kent – 110m of rain in 24 hours. Firefighters used boats to rescue people from buildings flooded by up to 1.83m of water. Telephone and electricity lines cut. Lightning strikes set fire to many buildings (6 injured, 190 buildings damaged, 44 homes uninhabitable).
August 1996	Hostage plane at Stanstead Airport.
October 1996	An explosion and fire at Albright and Wilson plant at Avonmouth with subsequent massive black toxic cloud spreading over Bristol area (11 workers injured, 34 local residents hospitalized with respiratory and eye problems).
October 1996	Tail end of Hurricane Lili hit Britain with gales blowing at over 90mph (4 dead, lorries knocked over, coastal roads flooded, 40,000 people without electricity).

(Ayre, 1997)

## **APPENDIX D – LEAD GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT CONCEPT**



“Against the types of disaster or emergency listed are shown the pre-nominated Lead Government Departments:

1. FLOODING (*coastal or riverine*)  
Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food or equivalent department of Scottish and Welsh Offices or the appropriate government department in Northern Ireland.
2. MARINE AND COASTAL OIL POLLUTION (*oil, chemical or gas*)  
Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (Marine Pollution Control Unit)
3. RADIATION HAZARDS (*arising within the United Kingdom*)  
Department of Trade and Industry for civil nuclear installations in England and Wales; The Scottish Office for civil nuclear installations in Scotland; Ministry of Defence for defence nuclear installations and nuclear material in transit; or Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions for civil nuclear material in transit. In Northern Ireland responsibility for civil nuclear materials in transit lies with the Department of the Environment (NI).
4. RADIATION HAZARDS (*arising outside the United Kingdom*)  
Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions
5. SATELLITE INCIDENT  
Home Office
6. EMERGENCIES ON OFFSHORE INSTALLATIONS  
Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (Health and Safety Executive)
7. DISASTERS OVERSEAS (*in which UK assistance is sought*)  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Department for International Development)
8. SEARCH AND RESCUE  
Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (The Coastguard Agency) for civil shipping; Ministry of Defence for military shipping and aircraft, for civil aircraft at sea and for civil aircraft on land when the location is not known (when the location is known and the emergency is treated as a transport accident – see 11).
9. SEVERE STORMS  
Home Office or appropriate departments of Scottish and Welsh Offices or the appropriate government department in Northern Ireland initially, with Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions assuming the lead role at a later stage if appropriate.
10. OTHER GENERAL WEATHER EMERGENCIES  
Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions or the appropriate department of Scottish or Welsh Offices or the appropriate government department in Northern Ireland.
11. TRANSPORT ACCIDENTS (*including those overseas involving UK registered ships and aircraft*)  
Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions.
12. ACCIDENTS IN SPORTS GROUNDS  
Department of Culture, Media and Sport or the appropriate department of Scottish or Welsh Offices or the appropriate government department in Northern Ireland in close consultation with Department of Culture, Media and Sport.
13. MAJOR EXPLOSIONS ARISING FROM LANDFILL GAS, DAM FAILURES, EARTHQUAKES, SERIOUS INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS AND MAJOR STRUCTURAL FAILURES IN BUILDINGS (*other than those caused by external impact, gas explosion, fire or industrial process*)  
Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions or appropriate department of the Scottish or Welsh Offices or the appropriate government department in Northern Ireland. If a government building is involved the relevant department would lead.

14. SERIOUS INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

Depending on the nature of the accident, initial lead responsibility would be taken by: *Home Office* if the activities of the emergency services are the main focus of attention. *Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions* if rivers, inland waterways (outside Port authority jurisdiction) or water services in England are the main cause of concern, or gas clouds of unknown origin are threatening the environment or public safety, or if the main focus of attention is the Secretary of State's responsibility for operations of the Health and Safety Executive.

*Scottish or Welsh Offices or the appropriate government department in Northern Ireland* for incidents in those parts of the UK for which there Secretaries of State are responsible. The Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Committee Secretary is responsible for ensuring that one of these departments is confirmed as the Lead Government Department at the onset of an industrial accident.

15. UNEXPLODED WARTIME ORDNANCE

Home Office"

(Home Office, 1998)

**APPENDIX E – STANDARDS FOR CIVIL PROTECTION IN  
ENGLAND AND WALES**

Theme:	Standard:	Description:	Key Elements:
Policy/profile	The authority should demonstrate a commitment to developing and maintaining effective emergency management arrangements	To be fully effective, emergency management arrangements must have the positive support of Elected Members and senior staff. Arrangements should be corporately owned and all those likely to be involved in a response should feel they have an investment in the planning process and its successful operation.	The authority should, after a fundamental service review, have a public statement that explains its Emergency Planning objective/strategy. The authority should identify the main hazards within the area, and those within neighbouring areas which could have an impact on them. Senior staff should have their emergency management responsibilities noted in their job descriptions. The authority should produce, and maintain, a work programme. Any department/service area with a role in emergency arrangements must be involved in the planning process.
Resources	The authority should ensure that all available resources are identified having regard to the risk, to deliver an effective emergency response.	Resources are people, finance and equipment but also include mechanisms to access alternatives and the development of practical arrangements to contact and call out staff.	Establish a mechanism for authorizing additional expenditure during an emergency. Ensure that contactors are aware of, and commit to, their responsibilities in an emergency. Establish a mechanism for securing additional resources during an emergency. Ensure continuity of communication systems. Establish call-out lists.
Continuity of Service	The authority should ensure that it can continue to deliver its critical services during, and following, a major incident.		Prioritise key/critical services. Develop strategies to maintain business as usual. Establish systems (including IT and communications) back-up. Identify alternative premises. Develop a strategy for the recovery phase.

Theme:	Standard:	Description:	Key Elements:
Training/ validation	<p>a. The authority should ensure that anyone likely to be involved in emergency arrangements is fully prepared for the role.</p> <p>b. There should be a system in place to validate response procedures through training and exercising.</p>	<p>Training should ensure that those involved in the response are aware of their role and sufficiently prepared to operate systems. Validation examines if systems are in place, whether they are the correct approach, and how easily and speedily changes can be introduced.</p>	<p>Annual training and exercising programmes developed in conjunction with, and focused on the needs of, departments/service areas. Opportunities for training and exercising with external organizations involved in the response. All departments/service areas or organizations participating in training events or exercises should have clearly stated aims and objectives. Evaluation procedures should be in place. Action plans should be prepared following exercises to implement lessons learned.</p>
Consultation/ liaison	<p>The authority should ensure that effective liaison and consultation takes place within its own organization, and with external stakeholders.</p>	<p>I.E.M. underlines the need for an authority to arrange regular meetings across departments/service areas to assess planning and training needs.</p>	<p>Identify and define roles of partners in a response. A strategic group of statutory responders (normally within the police force boundary) including representatives from all local authorities in the area together with emergency services, and health providers. Involvement of representatives from industry, voluntary organizations, utilities and other stakeholders as appropriate.</p>
Service provided to other authorities	<p>Where one authority provides an Emergency Planning service to another, a formal arrangement should be agreed. A similar arrangement should be negotiated between Shire Districts and County authorities.</p>	<p>A variety of joint arrangements exist for the delivery of Emergency Planning. This standard refers to arrangements to where a 'host' or 'lead' authority provides the service to similar authorities, or where a new unitary authority has opted for a joint arrangement with the county of which it was formally part.</p>	<p>Annual review of progress. Agreed work programmes. Clarity of roles, responsibilities and expectations.</p>

(Home Office, October 1999)

## **APPENDIX F – SAMPLE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

### Plan Writing Performance Indicators

<u>BV PI Ref</u>	<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Performance Target(s)</u>	<u>Output</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
EP1	The time taken to produce an effective, integrated emergency plan to meet statutory requirements	National 100% of plans to be produced within prescribed statutory timescales	Completed plans distributed to all agencies with operational role	Effective emergency plans delivered to Health and Safety Executive Guidance Standards (HS (G) 191) and adopted by local emergency services as an efficient operational response strategy for an identified local hazard
EP2	The time taken to produce an effective integrated emergency plan for other non-statutory hazards	Local (% given as example) 75% of plans to be produced within 6 months of commencement of planning process. 100% of plans to be produced within 12 months of commencement of planning process.	Completed plans distributed to all agencies with operational role.	Effective emergency plans delivered to Health and Safety Executive Guidance Standards (HS (G) 191) and adopted by local emergency services as an efficient operational response strategy for an identified local hazard
EP3	Regularity of update/audit/amendments to all existing plans	Local (% given as example) 100% of plans to be checked, updated, amended and reissued within 12 months of issue or previous update	Amendments distributed to all agencies holding existing (controlled) emergency plans.	Current and up to date information within plans ensuring ongoing effectiveness.

### Training/Exercising Performance Indicators

<u>BV PI Ref</u>	<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Performance Target(s)</u>	<u>Output</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
EP4	Number of local authority personnel receiving emergency planning related training/year	Local (number given as example) 400 people with an identified role in an emergency plan	Increased awareness of role in response to a major incident	Increased effectiveness of response

EP5	Number of non-local authority personnel (eg emergency services, voluntary sector). Receiving emergency planning related training per year.	Local (number given as example) 200 people with an identified role in an emergency plan	Increased awareness of role in response to a major incident	Increased effectiveness of response
EP6	Number of statutory plans exercised per year	National. To meet statutory requirements under COMAH/PSR	Validation of plans/procedures	Inclusion of identified improvements to plans. Increased awareness of response role in personnel involved in exercise.
EP7	Number of non-statutory plans exercised per year	Local (duration given as example) Plans exercised on rolling programme – duration not exceeding three years	Validation of plans/procedures	Inclusion of identified improvements to plans. Increased awareness of response roles in personnel involved in exercise.

#### Emergency Response Performance Indicators

BV PI Ref	Indicator	Performance Target(s)	Output	Outcome
EP8	Time taken to access local authority support in event of major incident (office hours)	Local (times given as example) 0-5 minutes emergency planning officer initial verbal response and assessment 5-15 minutes confirmation of resource availability 15-30 minutes FLO deployed if required 15-60 minutes further support deployed 60 minutes onward resource co-ordination and further deployment	Local authority support deployed	Enhanced response to major incidents due to support of local authorities and voluntary sector



EP9	Time taken to access local authority support in event of major incident (out of office hours)	Local (times given as example) 0-5 minutes emergency planning officer initial verbal response and assessment 5-30 minutes confirmation of response availability 15-45 minutes FLO deployed if required 30-60 minutes further support deployed 60 minutes onward resource co-ordination and further deployment	Local authority support deployed	Enhanced response to major incidents due to support of local authorities and voluntary sector
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#### Liaison Performance Indicators

<u>BV PI Ref</u>	<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Performance Target(s)</u>	<u>Output</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
EP10	Number of inter-agency liaison group meetings per year	Local (number given as example) Four meetings per year	Structured meeting with agreed agenda to address local current emergency planning issues	Minuted meetings with identified actions to ensure effective, integrated ongoing emergency planning management
EP11	Ongoing liaison with stakeholder organisations	Local. Allocated named liaison officers in all emergency services and all local authorities	Ease of contact with stakeholder organisations	Establishment of continuity and ongoing commitment to emergency planning

### Management Performance Indicators

BV PI Ref	Indicator	Performance Target(s)	Output	Outcome
EP12	Net expenditure per head of population	Local % reduction in overall running costs of Unit	Units will have comprehensive policies and guidance based upon financial regulations established for the financial administration of the authority	The Units financial policies, planning, procedures and management results in sound utilisation of resources
EP13	Number of working days lost to sickness absence	Local To reduce the number of working days lost through sickness to "x"	Effectiveness sickness management policies and control measures. Family friendly policies.	Maximum effectiveness and efficiency by all staff.
EP14	Percentage of stakeholders satisfied with the overall service provided by the Unit	Local 100% satisfaction rate from all stakeholders	Awareness of the needs and expectations of all stakeholders	Maintained awareness and mutual understanding between the emergency planning unit and all its stakeholders ensuring effective service delivery
EP15	Annual building running costs (excluding repairs and maintenance) per square metre	Local % of overall budget to be allocated to building running costs	Buildings will meet at least the minimum standard for the health, safety and welfare requirements of users in addition to the intended functions	Buildings meet the needs of the unit and used in an efficient manner
EP16	Emergency planning staff participating in professional development	Local % of staff undertaking training and personal development	The Units policies and plans result in effective training of staff designed to meet all statutory duties, nationally recommended standards and good practices, local needs and individual needs	All staff are competent to fulfil their functional roles, duties and responsibilities thereby enhancing the quality of service delivery
EP17	Number of equal opportunity complaints received	Local 100% of all complaints resolved to a satisfactory conclusion	All staff appropriately trained to have an awareness of equality, fairness and dignity at work and to perform their duties in a way which is consistent with that philosophy.	All members of staff will be treated fairly and allowed to retain their personal dignity at work. Best practice standards maintained with respect to recruitment and selection.

(Emergency Planning Benchmark Group For Shire Counties Sharing Emergency Planning Facilities With Unitary Authorities, July 2001)

**APPENDIX G – STATISTICAL TESTS UNDERTAKEN IN  
SUPPORT OF THE FORMULATED HYPOTHESES**

**Hypothesis 1. The funding an Emergency Management service receives from Civil Defence Grant and/or by in-house local authority financial contribution influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is provided.**

**Supporting Tests:**

- 1.1. Stakeholders from local authorities in receipt of Grant are potentially more likely to make a financial contribution towards the cost of providing the service than those from local authorities not in receipt of Grant.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between Grant status and making a financial contribution towards the service

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between Grant status and making a financial contribution towards the service

Key variables – Grant status/making a financial contribution

Rationale – Emergency Management whilst being a non-statutory requirement is viewed by many as a moral requirement. Local authorities that receive an allocation of Grant are potentially more likely to take this moral responsibility seriously and make a financial contribution towards maintaining/delivering/improving the service (i.e. supplementing the Grant allocation) than local authorities that do not receive any allocation whatsoever.

Findings - P-Value = 0.0000, DF = 1, P<0.001 (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion - Reject H<sub>0</sub> – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 1.2. Elected Members representing authorities that receive Grant are perhaps perceived by stakeholders as being more supportive of the Emergency Management service than Members in authorities not in receipt of Grant.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between Grant status and level of Elected Member support for service

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between Grant status and the level of Elected Member support for service

Key variables – Grant status/level of Elected Member support for service

Rationale – An authority in receipt of Grant allocation has a dedicated financial resource to spend providing a service which is non-statutory. By having dedicated finance a local authority is more likely to have pre-agreed Emergency Management arrangements in place which are known and promoted throughout the authority (including with Elected Members).

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 3, P<0.001 (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject H<sub>0</sub> – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 1.3. Stakeholders from local authorities in receipt of Grant are possibly more likely to have a Chief Executive, or equivalent, with a specific Emergency Management role included in their job description compared with those from authorities not in receipt of Grant allocation.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between Grant status and a Chief Executive having an Emergency Management role in job description

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between Grant status and a Chief Executive having an Emergency Management role in job description

Key variables – Grant status/Emergency Management role explicitly stated in a Chief Executive's job description

Rationale – A local authority receiving specific Grant from central government is perhaps more likely to accept its responsibilities for Emergency Management and have an appropriate role incorporated into their Chief Executive's job description than a non-grant receiving local authority.

Findings - P-Value = 0.344, DF = 1,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 1.4. Stakeholders from local authorities in receipt of Grant are perhaps more inclined to believe Emergency Management is fully integrated into their corporate aims and objectives compared with those from authorities not in receipt of Grant.

$H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and perception Emergency Management is integrated into the authority's corporate aims and objectives

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and perception Emergency Management is service integrated into the authority's corporate aims and objectives

Key variables – Grant status/level of service integration into corporate aims and objectives

Rationale – Authorities receiving Civil Defence Grant have been able to direct monies specifically towards Emergency Management and therefore have a potentially higher probability of having a service that is integrated into their corporate aims and objectives. In contrast, authorities that do not received Grant are more unlikely to have been able to fund the service and as a result there is no Emergency Management integration into corporate aims and objectives.

Findings - P-Value = 0.003, DF = 3,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A strong significant association exists at the 1% level.

- 1.5. A community served by stakeholders from an authority in receipt of Grant is perhaps more likely to understand their local authority has a role to perform before, during and after an emergency compared with a community served by an authority not in receipt of Grant allocation.

$H_0$  - no association exists Grant status and community's understanding of local authority's role before, during and after an emergency

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and community's understanding of local authority's role before, during and after an emergency

Key variables – Grant status/level of community understanding of authority's role before, during and after an emergency

Rationale – An authority receiving Grant is perhaps more likely to have promoted its Emergency Management service therefore making its local community aware of the authority's role before, during and after an emergency.

Findings - P-Value = 0.978, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 1.6. Stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant are potentially more confident their local community are aware of the service compared with those from local authorities that do not receive Grant allocation.

$H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and local community awareness of the service

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and local community awareness of the service

Key variables – Grant status /local community awareness of the service

Rationale – A local authority receiving specific Grant for Emergency Management is perhaps more likely to have used their dedicated resources to promote the service with the local community in order to raise awareness of emergency procedures.

Findings - P-Value = 0.105, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 1.7. Stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant are perhaps more confident they provide a service reflecting the needs of the local community compared with those from authorities that do not receive Grant allocation.

$H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and level of confidence the Emergency Management service provided reflects community needs

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and level of confidence the Emergency Management service provided reflects community needs

Key variables – Grant status/level of confidence in service reflecting local community needs

Rationale – Authorities in receipt of Grant are perhaps more likely to have the necessary resources to assess the needs of the local community and provide an appropriate service.

Findings - P-Value = 0.235, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 1.8. Strategists in receipt of Grant are more likely to believe their service reflects the needs of the local community compared with tacticians from authorities that receive Grant.

$H_0$  - no association exists between type of respondent and their level of confidence in providing an Emergency Management service reflecting local community needs

$H_1$  - an association exists between type of respondent and their level of confidence in providing an Emergency Management service that reflecting local community needs

Key variables – type of respondent/level of confidence in providing service reflecting community needs

Rationale – Is it possible the perceptions of local authority strategists and tacticians differ? If so this suggests there is some lack of understanding regarding local community needs. In addition, it could highlight conflict between the views of strategists and tacticians i.e. if strategists believe the current services does reflect local needs whilst tacticians (at the service delivery ‘grass roots’ end of the authority) do not believe the service reflects local needs.

Findings - P-Value = 0.333,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 1.9. Stakeholders from authorities not in receipt of Grant are potentially more likely to believe local authority Emergency Management can be improved by the implementation of Best Value than those from local authorities in receipt of Grant allocation.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and the expected service improvements resulting from Best Value
- $H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and the expected service improvements resulting from Best Value
- Key variables – Grant status/expectation of Best Value in service
- Rationale – While on the one hand there is the argument Emergency Management should be the responsibility of every level of local government, the current status is Grant is only allocated to certain types of local authorities. Best Value will allow local authorities to challenge where responsibility for this service lies and how it should be provided.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.109, DF = 1,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 1.10. Stakeholders from local authorities making a financial contribution towards the service are perhaps more likely to believe it can be improved by the implementation of Best Value compared with those from authorities that do not make a financial contribution.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between making a financial contribution and expected improvements in service resulting from Best Value implementation
- $H_1$  - an association exists between making a financial contribution and expected improvements in service resulting from Best Value
- Key variables – making financial contribution/expectation of Best Value in service
- Rationale – A Best Value Review will potentially provide local authorities that make a financial contribution towards the service with the opportunity to question why they deliver, and fund, a service that is a non-statutory requirement.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 1,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 1.11. Stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant allocation are possibly more likely to have a service working towards Best Value than a service provided by an authority not in receipt of Grant.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and Emergency Management service working towards Best Value
- $H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and Emergency Management service working towards Best Value
- Key variables – receiving Grant/service working towards Best Value
- Rationale – Local authorities that receive Grant allocation may have an advanced Emergency Management service and therefore be able to consider applying Best Value principles. In contrast local authorities that do not receive Grant are potentially more likely to have an ad hoc approach to the service, i.e. respond to an emergency as it happens rather than having undertaken pre-planning, therefore making it more difficult to apply Best Value.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 1,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 1.12. Stakeholders from authorities making a financial contribution towards Emergency Management are potentially more likely to have a service working towards Best Value compared with those from local authorities that do not make a contribution.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between making a financial contribution and having service working towards Best Value
- $H_1$  - an association exists between making a financial contribution and having service working towards Best Value
- Key variables – making a financial contribution/having a service working towards Best Value
- Rationale – Providing an Emergency Management service is not a statutory requirement. Local authorities who make a financial contribution towards funding a service that is not a statutory requirement are arguably more likely to address this service sooner rather than later in the Best Value process in order to determine whether finances are being used correctly.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.045, DF = 1,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.
- 1.13. Stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant are possibly more likely to believe Emergency Management services are provided to a consistent standard across England, Scotland and Wales compared with those from authorities not in receipt of Grant allocation.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and consistency of service delivery in mainland U.K.
- $H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and consistency of service delivery in mainland U.K.
- Key variables – Grant status/service consistency in the mainland U.K.
- Rationale – Local authorities in receipt of Grant have dedicated finance to implement the limited best practice guidance which is produced for local authority Emergency Management unlike authorities which do not receive Grant and perhaps do not have dedicated resources.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.953, DF = 2,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 1.14. Stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant are perhaps more likely to believe Emergency Management arrangements in England, Scotland and Wales should be capable of dovetailing together regardless of differences in national and local laws and customs compared with those from authorities not in receipt of Grant.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and the perception Emergency Management arrangements should dovetail
- $H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and the perception Emergency Management arrangements should dovetail
- Key variables – Grant status/perceived need for compatibility in U.K. arrangements
- Rationale – Local authorities in receipt of Grant should have dedicated resources for Emergency Management as well as officers assigned with responsibility for the service who can make informed opinions about how it should be delivered. These officers are more likely to be aware that emergencies can affect not only a number of local authorities but a number of countries and that differences in national laws as well as local laws and customs can lead to additional complications which could hamper mutual aid assistance.



Findings - P-Value = 0.015, DF = 2,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)  
Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 1.15. Stakeholders from authorities not in receipt of Grant are potentially more likely to believe a national stand-alone Emergency Management Unit, replacing all local authority Units, would provide the most effective form of service delivery compared with those from authorities that do receive Grant allocation.

$H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and perception a national stand-alone Unit would provide most effective service delivery.

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and perception a national stand-alone Unit would provide most effective service delivery.

Key variables –Grant status/national stand-alone Unit replacing local authority Units to provide most effective service

Rationale –Local authorities not in receipt of Grant are perhaps less likely to have dedicated resources for Emergency Management and therefore less likely to have advanced pre-planned arrangements in place for ensuring an effective response to an emergency. Such authorities are potentially more willing for a central, specialist stand-alone Unit to provide the service instead of them.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 3,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 1.16. Stakeholders from authorities not in receipt of Grant are possibly more likely to believe a national Unit supporting local authority Units would provide a more effective form of Emergency Management compared with those from local authorities that do receive Grant.

$H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and belief a national stand-alone Unit supporting local authority Units would provide most effective service

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and belief a national stand-alone Unit supporting local authority Units would provide most effective service

Key variables –Grant status/perceived belief national Unit supporting local authority Units would provide most effective service

Rationale – Local authorities that do not receive Grant are perhaps more unlikely to have dedicated Emergency Management resources, procedures and systems in place, compared with those local authorities receiving Grant. However, all authorities arguably have a moral responsibility to protect their local community. A national Unit could provide the professional advice, assistance and general support that a local authority would require in order to provide its local community with an effective service.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 3,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 1.17. Stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant are arguably more likely to believe a national Unit is not needed compared with those from local authorities that do not receive Grant allocation.

$H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and perception that national Unit is unnecessary

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and the perception that national Unit is unnecessary

Key variables –Grant status/perception national Unit is unnecessary

Rationale – Local authorities receiving specific Grant from central government in order to deliver an Emergency Management service at a local level will prefer to continue doing so rather than being dictated too by central government.

Findings - P-Value = 0.014, DF = 3,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 1.18. Stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant are perhaps more inclined to believe Emergency Management should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries compared with those from local authorities that do not receive Grant allocation.

$H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and perception current administrative boundaries should continue

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and perception current administrative boundaries should continue

Key variables –Grant status/perception the service should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries

Rationale – Local authorities that have received Grant allocation will potentially have established procedures and plans in operation that work in accordance with their current administrative boundaries. Many local authorities have in recent years, due to Local Government Re-organisation, had to undertake considerable additional work to amend existing Emergency Management procedures to re-align them with newly imposed administrative working boundaries. Whilst amending procedures can happen relatively quickly it takes a considerable amount of time to integrate procedures into the culture of the local authority in terms of liaison, training and exercising.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 3,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 1.19. Stakeholders from authorities in receipt of Grant are perhaps less inclined to believe the service should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries than those from authorities that do not receive Grant allocation.

$H_0$  - no association exists between Grant status and perception wider regional boundaries should be adopted

$H_1$  - an association exists between Grant status and perception wider regional boundaries should be adopted

Key variables –Grant status/level of perceived support for delivering the service in wider regional boundaries

Rationale – Local authorities which currently receive specific Grant allocation to provide an Emergency Management service are perhaps more likely to believe that emergency response is best provided at a local level. Such local authorities may feel if wider boundaries are to be adopted fewer designated Emergency Management Officers may be required, individual local authorities may not receive as much grant allocation, decisions would be made further away from the local community and authorities may no longer have their own designated Officer(s) providing expert advice before, during and after an emergency if wider regional working boundaries were introduced.

Findings - P-Value = 0.051, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 1.20. Stakeholders from authorities that make a financial contribution towards the cost of the service are perhaps more likely to believe the service should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries compared with those from authorities which do not make a financial contribution.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between making financial contribution towards service and perception wider regional boundaries should be adopted
- $H_1$  - an association exists between making financial contribution towards service and perception wider regional boundaries should be adopted
- Key variables – making financial contribution towards the service/perception the service should be delivered in-line with wider regional boundaries
- Rationale – Local authorities that make a financial contribution to provide a service that is not a statutory requirement are perhaps more likely to feel adopting wider regional working boundaries would allow economies of scale to be achieved as well as the pooling of expertise.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.047, DF = 3,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.
- 1.21. Strategists who make a financial contribution towards the service are perhaps more inclined to believe it should work towards wider regional boundaries compared with operational staff from authorities that make a contribution.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between type of respondent and the perception of wider regional working boundaries
- $H_1$  - an association exists between type of respondent and the perception of wider regional working boundaries
- Key variables – type of respondent/perception of wider regional working boundaries
- Rationale – Is it possible the perceptions of local authority strategists and operational staff differ? Perhaps strategists are more likely to take the view they are currently using money to supplement a non-statutory duty and economies of scale could be obtained if the service was delivered over a wider area.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.138, DF = 4,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 1.22. Stakeholders from authorities not making a financial contribution towards the Emergency Management service are possibly more likely to believe it should be funded solely by central government specific grant compared with those from authorities that do make a contribution.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between not making a financial contribution and perception Emergency Management should be funded solely by specific grant
- $H_1$  - an association exists between not making a financial contribution and perception Emergency Management should be funded solely by specific grant
- Key variables – making financial contribution/perception service should be funded solely by central government specific grant
- Rationale – Local authorities not making a financial contribution towards the Emergency Management service arguably do so because they know it is not a statutory duty. Local authorities are facing severe financial difficulties in maintaining and improving existing services. They are more inclined to believe until Emergency Management is made a statutory duty it is not the responsibility of the local authority to fund the service.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 3,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 1.23. Stakeholders from authorities that do make a financial contribution towards the cost of the service are perhaps more likely to believe the current level of central government specific grant is insufficient for authorities to provide an effective service compared with those from authorities that do not make a contribution.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between making financial contribution and perception the current level of specific grant is insufficient
- $H_1$  - an association exists between making financial contribution and perception the current level of specific grant is insufficient
- Key variables – not making financial contribution/perception the current level of central government Grant is insufficient
- Rationale – It is unlikely local authorities would make a financial contribution from their own money to supplement a central government specific grant to provide a non-statutory service unless it was necessary to maintain or improve the service.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.597, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 1.24. Stakeholders from authorities that are not confident they provide a service reflecting local community needs are perhaps more likely to believe the Grant formula should arise from a Risk/Benefit Analysis compared with those from authorities that feel they do provide a service reflecting needs.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between perception service does not reflect local community needs and belief Grant formula should be based on Risk/Benefit Analysis
- $H_1$  - an association exists between perception service does not reflect local community needs and belief Grant formula should be based on Risk/Benefit Analysis
- Key variables – levels of confidence in providing service reflecting needs of local community/belief Grant formula should arise from Risk/Benefit Analysis
- Rationale – A local authority that believes it does not provide an Emergency Management service reflecting the needs of its local community possibly have this belief because the existing funding mechanism does not take into consideration the identified risks in the area. A Risk/Benefit analysis would clearly identify those issues that need to be addressed in order to provide an Emergency Management service that is more reflective of the needs of the local community. A Risk/Benefit analysis could potentially ensure Grant money was allocated to areas where there is a higher probability of an emergency occurring.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.414, DF = 6,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 1.25. Stakeholders from authorities that feel the current level of Grant is insufficient to provide an effective service are possibly more inclined to believe external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in provision in the future compared with those from authorities who feel the current level of Grant is sufficient.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between perceived belief the current level of Grant is insufficient and belief external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in future service provision

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between perceived belief the current level of Grant is insufficient and belief external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in future service provision

Key variables – perception of current Grant allocation/perceived need for external funding and sponsorship in future service provision

Rationale – While a local authority may be serious about Emergency Management they may not currently have the resources from within their own budgets to supplement the Grant and therefore are more likely to believe future finances could be obtained from external funding and sponsorship.

Findings - P-Value = 0.447, DF = 3, P>0.05 (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept H<sub>0</sub> – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 1.26. Stakeholders from authorities that feel the new Grant formula (2000/01; 2001/02) will not allocate money effectively are more likely to believe external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in future service provision compared with those from authorities who feel the new formula will be effective.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between perception new Grant formula will not be effective and belief external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in future service provision

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between perception new Grant formula will not be effective and belief external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in future service provision

Key variables – perception of the new 2000/01 and 2001/02 formulas/perceived need for external funding and sponsorship in future

Rationale – A local authority with a full appreciation of the Emergency Management service may perhaps believe the new Grant allocation will be insufficient to fund the service to an acceptable level and therefore funding must be found from other sources.

Findings - P-Value = 0.720, DF = 2, P>0.05 (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept H<sub>0</sub> – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 1.27. Stakeholders from authorities that do not receive an allocation of Grant are perhaps more likely to believe external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in service provision in the future compared with those from authorities which do receive Grant.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between not receiving Grant and perceived belief external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in future service provision

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between not receiving Grant formula and perceived belief external funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in future service provision

Key variables – Grant status/perceived need for external funding and sponsorship in future service delivery

Rationale – Whilst local authorities may appreciate the importance of the Emergency Management service they may feel they cannot justify to the local community spending tax payers money on a service with no statutory requirement. However, they can also not justify not protecting the local community from the possible impact of an emergency. Seeking external funding and sponsorship may provide an answer to this dilemma.

Findings - P-Value = 0.001, DF = 3,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertain removed)  
Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

**Hypothesis 2. The legislative base to which a local authority's Emergency Management service operates influences the way in which the service is provided.**

**Supporting Tests:**

- 2.1. Stakeholders from authorities not in receipt of Grant are possibly more likely to believe Best Value can only be achieved in the service if new civil protection legislation is introduced placing a statutory duty upon all compared with those from authorities that do receive Grant allocation.

$H_0$  - no association exists between receiving Grant and perceived belief Best Value is only achievable if new civil protection legislation is introduced

$H_1$  - an association exists between receiving Grant and perceived belief Best Value is only achievable if new civil protection legislation is introduced

Key variables - Grant status/perceived need for new civil protection legislation

Rationale – Local authorities that already receive Grant will have resources and personnel dedicated towards providing an Emergency Management service. With resources, including personnel and finance, steadily decreasing over recent years it is likely that shortfalls are appearing in the service, shortfalls that should be exposed under the Best Value regime. Emergency Management is not a statutory requirement and therefore requests for additional funding may not be considered seriously, however, if a legislative duty for Emergency Management was placed upon the authority full consideration would have to be given to it.

Findings - P-Value = 0.039, DF = 3,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertain removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 2.2. Stakeholders from authorities that do not make a financial contribution towards the cost of the service are possibly more likely to believe Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation is introduced placing a statutory duty upon all compared with the views held by stakeholders from authorities that already make a financial contribution towards the cost.

$H_0$  - no association exists between making a financial contribution and belief Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation introduced

$H_1$  - an association exists between making a financial contribution and belief Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation introduced

Key variables – making financial contribution towards service/perceived need for new civil protection legislation

Rationale – Some local authorities, regardless of whether they receive Grant, may understand the importance of Emergency Management but due to their financial position may not be able to justify funding a non-statutory service.

Findings - P-Value = 0.111, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertain removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 2.3. Stakeholders from authorities that are not confident they provide a service reflecting local community needs are perhaps more likely to believe Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation is introduced compared with those from authorities that feel they provide a service reflecting local needs.

$H_0$  - no association exists between not providing a service reflecting local community needs and belief Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation is introduced

$H_1$  - an association exists between not providing a service reflecting local community needs and belief Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation is introduced

Key variables – perception of existing service meeting needs of local community/belief new civil protection legislation is necessary

Rationale – It is possible local authorities which currently provide a service not reflecting local needs would be more supportive of new civil protection legislation clearly stating what is required of them in terms of providing an Emergency Management service.

Findings - P-Value = 0.070, DF = 6,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 2.4. Operational staff who are not confident their service reflects local community needs are more likely to believe Best Value is only achievable if new civil protection legislation is enacted compared with strategists who are also not confident about meeting local needs.

$H_0$  - no association exists between type of respondent and belief Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation is introduced

$H_1$  - an association exists between type of respondent and belief Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation is introduced

Key variables – type of respondent/belief new civil protection legislation is necessary

Rationale – Is it possible the perceptions of local authority strategists and operational staff differ? Operatives deliver the service on a day to day basis and therefore are arguably more informed to make an assessment of the need for new legislation.

Findings - P-Value = 0.208, DF = 4,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

**Hypothesis 3. The way in which an Emergency Management service is monitored nationally influences how it is provided.**

**Supporting Tests:**

- 3.1. Stakeholders from local authorities that believe Emergency Management arrangements in England, Scotland and Wales should be capable of dovetailing together regardless of differences in national and local laws and customs are perhaps more likely to believe a national service Inspectorate would raise standards and ensure good practice is disseminated to all authorities compared with those from local authorities that do not believe arrangements need to dovetail.

$H_0$  - no association exists between the belief arrangements should dovetail and perceived need for a national service Inspectorate

$H_1$  - an association exists between the belief arrangements should dovetail and perceived need for a national service Inspectorate

Key variables – perceived need for Emergency Management arrangements to dovetail/perceived need for national service Inspectorate

Rationale – A national body with responsibility for overseeing Emergency Management could ensure the standard of the service is not only consistent throughout England, Scotland and Wales but also that good practice is disseminated in order to ensure service compatibility.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 3.2. Stakeholders from local authorities that believe arrangements in England, Scotland and Wales should be capable of dovetailing are possibly more likely to believe national service performance indicators are an integral part of raising standards compared with those from authorities that do not feel arrangements should dovetail.

$H_0$  - no association exists between belief local authority Emergency Management arrangements should dovetail and perceived need for national service performance indicators

$H_1$  - an association exists between belief local authority Emergency Management arrangements should dovetail and perceived need for national service performance indicators

Key variables – perceived need for arrangements in the U.K. to dovetail/perceived need for national performance indicators as being key to raising service standard

Rationale – There is an argument Emergency Management service consistency and improvement cannot be achieved without national comparative indicators.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 4,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 3.3. Stakeholders from authorities whose Emergency Management service is already working towards Best Value are perhaps more likely to believe national performance indicators are an integral part of raising the service's standard compared with those from authorities whose service is not working towards Best Value.

$H_0$  - no association exists between service working towards Best Value and perceived need for national performance indicators

$H_1$  - an association exists between service working towards Best Value and perceived need for national performance indicators

Key variables – Service working towards Best Value/perception national performance indicators are key to raising service standards

Rationale – Local authorities with Emergency Management services already working towards Best Value are potentially more likely to fully appreciate the 'comparison' and 'competitiveness' elements of the process and will have appreciated the difficulties of proving a competitive service is delivered without having comparative data upon which to base such a decision.

Findings - P-Value = 0.126, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.



- 3.4. Stakeholders from authorities that believe a national Inspectorate would raise the service's standard and ensure good practice was disseminated to all are perhaps more likely to believe the service does not necessarily have to be delivered by local authority personnel compared with those from authorities that feel there is no need for a national Inspectorate.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between perception a national Inspectorate would raise the service's standard and belief the service does not necessarily have to be delivered by local authority personnel
- $H_1$  - an association exists between perception a national Inspectorate would raise the service's standard and belief the service does not necessarily have to be delivered by local authority personnel
- Key variables – perceived need for a national Inspectorate/belief service does not necessarily need to be delivered by local authority personnel
- Rationale – There is an argument that if a National Inspectorate is over-seeing the Emergency Management service to ensure it is provided to a high standard and that good practice is disseminated to all relevant organizations then who actually provides the service is irrelevant.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.004, DF = 6,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 3.5. Stakeholders from authorities that believe national performance indicators are an integral part of raising the service's standard are possibly more likely to believe the service does not necessarily have to be delivered by local authority personnel compared with those from authorities that believe national indicators are not needed.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between level of support for national performance indicators as being key to raising service's standard and belief service does not need to be delivered by local authority personnel
- $H_1$  - an association exists between level of support for national performance indicators as being key to raising service's standard and belief service does not need to be delivered by local authority personnel
- Key variables – perceived need for national performance indicators/belief as to who should deliver the service
- Rationale – There is an argument that so long as an Emergency Management service is meeting national performance indicators then who actually provides the service should not be an issue.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.004, DF = 4,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A strong significant association exists at the 1% level.
- 3.6. Strategists who are supportive of national performance indicators are perhaps more likely to believe local authority personnel do not necessarily need to provide the Emergency Management service compared with operational staff who are supportive of indicators.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between type of respondent and the belief Emergency Management does not need to be delivered by local authority personnel
- $H_1$  - an association exists between type of respondent and the belief Emergency Management does not need to be delivered by local authority personnel
- Key variables – type of respondent/belief as to who should deliver the service
- Rationale – Is it possible the perceptions of local authority strategists and operational staff differ? Are strategists more likely to believe the service can be outsourced so long as there are control and monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure its standards?
- Findings - P-Value = 0.203,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion – Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

**Hypothesis 4. The cultural elements of a local authority in relation to its geographical location, structure, high-level support and working boundaries influences the way in which an Emergency Management service is provided**

**Supporting Tests:**

- 4.1. Stakeholders from authorities with designated in-house Emergency Planning Officer(s) are more likely to perceive the service is not provided to a consistent standard across England, Scotland and Wales compared with those from local authorities without in-house designated in-house Officer(s).
- $H_0$  - no association exists between having designated in-house Officer(s) and perception of service consistency across mainland U.K.
- $H_1$  - an association exists between having designated in-house Officer(s) and perception of service consistency across mainland U.K.
- Key variables – having designated in-house Emergency Planning Officers/perception of service consistency
- Rationale –Emergency Planning Officers are a small circle of professionals with a good network for sharing experiences and information. As a result of the networking it can be argued local authorities with designated in-house Emergency Planning Officer(s) are more aware of national service issues than local authorities who receive the service by other means.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.007, DF = 4,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncerains removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A strong significant association exists at the 1% level.
- 4.2. Stakeholders from authorities that believe Emergency Management is not provided to a consistent standard across the U.K. are possibly more likely to believe arrangements throughout the U.K. should be capable of dovetailing regardless of differences in national and local laws and customs compared with those from local authorities that feel the service is provided consistently.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between perception of service consistency and feeling arrangements should be capable of dovetailing
- $H_1$  - an association exists between perception of service consistency and feeling arrangements should be capable of dovetailing
- Key variables – Perception of service consistency/belief arrangements should dovetail
- Rationale – Local authorities that have indicated Emergency Management is not provided to a consistent standard across the U.K. but feel arrangements should be capable of dovetailing suggest joint working and mutual aid support is a key requirement in responding effectively to an emergency.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.014, DF = 4,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncerains removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.
- 4.3. Stakeholders from authorities that believe the service is not provided to a consistent standard across the U.K. are perhaps more likely to believe a national stand-alone Unit, replacing local authority Units, would provide the most effective service compared with those from authorities that believe service delivery is consistent across the U.K.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between perception of service consistency and belief a national stand-alone Unit would provide the most effective service

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between perception of service consistency and belief a national stand-alone Unit would provide most effective service

Key variables – Perception of service consistency/belief national stand-alone Unit would provide more effective service

Rationale – An Emergency Management service provided by a national stand-alone Unit, replacing all local authority Units, could mean professional decisions were made and implemented on a national basis thereby ensuring consistency across the U.K., i.e. no matter where the emergency occurs, or what the emergency is, the same response procedures would be applied.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 4, P<0.001 (after uncerains removed)

Conclusion – Reject H<sub>0</sub> – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

4.4. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities display a clearer understanding of how Emergency Management is currently provided compared with stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.

H<sub>0</sub> – no association exists between local authority structure and level of understanding of how service is currently provided

H<sub>1</sub> – an association exists between local authority structure and level of understanding of how service is currently provided

Key variables – local authority structure/level of understanding of Emergency Management

Rationale – Single Tier local authorities are responsible for all services in their geographical area which means there should be no confusion as to who delivers the Emergency Management service. However, in the Two Tier system of local government there is greater uncertainty as to where the responsible for Emergency Management rests and who delivers the service i.e. County level, District level or both.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6, P<0.001 (after uncerains removed)

Conclusion – Reject H<sub>0</sub> - A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

4.5. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are more likely to believe their Chief Executive, or equivalent, has an Emergency Planning role included in their job description compared with stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between local authority structure and explicit Emergency Management reference in Chief Executive job description

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between local authority structure and explicit Emergency Management reference in Chief Executive job description

Key variables – local authority structure/Emergency Management role in Chief Executive job description

Rationale – A Single Tier authority can be in no doubt of its role in emergency response (i.e. there is only one level of local government involved) and it is the Chief Executive who is ultimately responsible and accountable for the actions of the authority. Within the Two Tier authority structure there is confusion as to where responsibility rests for Emergency Management (i.e. is it the responding authority? is it the lead authority? etc).

Findings - P-Value = 0.031, DF = 3, P<0.05 (after uncerains removed)

Conclusion – Reject H<sub>0</sub> – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 4.6. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to believe Emergency Management is integrated into corporate aims and objectives compared with stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between structure and perceived integration of service into corporate aims and objectives
- $H_1$  - an association exists between structure and perceived integration of service into corporate aims and objectives
- Key variables – local authority structure/perceived service integration
- Rationale – A Single Tier authority cannot be in doubt of its role in Emergency response and it is therefore clear how Emergency Management fits into their organization making integration into corporate aims and objectives easier to achieve. However, within the Two-Tier structure there appears to be confusion as to where responsibility rests for the service thereby making integration more difficult to achieve.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 4.7. Stakeholders from local authorities with Chief Officers who are perceived to be supportive of Emergency Management are perhaps more likely to have Elected Members who are also perceived to be supportive of the service compared with those from local authorities who perceive Chief Officers to be non-supportive of the service.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between perceived Chief Officer support and Elected Member support for Emergency Management
- $H_1$  - an association exists between perceived Chief Officer support and Elected Member support for Emergency Management
- Key variables – Perceived Chief Officer support/perceived Elected Member support
- Rationale – Chief Officers and Elected Members work very closely to determine policies and the strategic direction of a local authority. Chief Officers undertake preparatory work and make appropriate recommendations while Elected Members make the final decisions based upon the views and information supplied to them. It can be argued if Chief Officers are supportive of a service, then Elected Members are also more likely to be supportive of the service.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, F = 4,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 4.8. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to believe it is necessary for local government to change its approach to decision-making compared with stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and belief local government approach to decision making should change
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and belief local government approach to decision making should change
- Key variables – local authority structure/changes necessary in local government decision making
- Rationale – Unitary authorities are a relatively new concept in local government and are responsible for all the services provided to their local community. Unitary authorities can compare their former (i.e. two tier) working experiences with their current working experiences (i.e. as a unitary).
- Findings - P-Value = 0.495, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 4.9. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to believe Best Value can enhance local government's decision making compared with stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perception Best Value will enhance local government decision making approaches
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perception Best Value will enhance local government decision making approaches
- Key variables - local authority structure/perception Best Value will enhance decision making approaches
- Rationale – One of the aims of Best Value is to encourage local authorities to adopt innovative ways of making decisions. It can be argued this concept will fit much more easily with the newly created Single Tier authorities than the traditional Two Tier 'bureaucratic' authorities.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.021, DF = 3,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  - A significant association exists at the 5% level.
- 4.10. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more inclined to believe it is necessary for local government to change its approach to service delivery compared with stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perceived need for change in local government service delivery
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perceived need for change in local government service delivery
- Key variables – local authority structure/perceived need for change in local government service delivery
- Rationale – Many newly created unitary authorities have been released from their former Two Tier authority working conditions (i.e. one level of local government provides certain services while the other level provides the rest). This suggests they are possibly more receptive to new ways of working and are less afraid/resistant to change as they have already undergone substantial change by going from a Two Tier authority to a Single Tier authority.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.036, DF = 3,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  - A significant association exists at the 5% level.
- 4.11. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more inclined to believe Best Value will enhance local government's service delivery compared with stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perception Best Value will enhance local government service delivery
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perception Best Value will enhance local government service delivery
- Key variables – local authority structure/perception Best Value will enhance local government service delivery
- Rationale – One of the aims of Best Value is to encourage local authorities to adopt innovative ways of delivering services. It can be argued this concept will fit more easily with the newly created Single Tier authorities than the more traditional 'bureaucratic' Two Tier authorities.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.001, DF = 3,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  - A strong significant association exists at the 1% level.

- 4.12. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more inclined to believe Best Value is radically different from C.C.T. than stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and belief Best Value differs radically from C.C.T.
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and belief Best Value differs radically from C.C.T.
- Key variables – local authority structure/belief Best Value differs radically from C.C.T.
- Rationale – Single Tier authorities are newly created establishments. Potentially they have fewer hierarchies and are dealing direct with the public. It can be argued they are in stronger position to be able to respond to the opportunities Best Value offers. However, Two Tier authorities may feel threatened by central government and as a result be more suspicious and skeptical of Best Value seeing it as being another centrally imposed constraint like C.C.T.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.056, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 4.13. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are possibly more confident their community is aware their participation is actively sought in policy decision-making compared with stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perceived local community awareness of policy to involve them in decision-making
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perceived local community awareness of policy to involve them in decision-making
- Key variables – local authority structure/perceived local community awareness of attempts to involve them in policy decision making
- Rationale – Single Tier authorities are in no doubt who their local community is because it is everyone within their working boundaries. However, Two Tier consultation is not so easy because one tier provides some services while the other level provides the rest. Communities served under the two tier system will have to be consulted twice, once by the County and once by the Shire District, and this perhaps will add to the communities confusion as to who serves them for what and possibly lead to lack of interest in assisting policy decision making.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 4.14. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are possibly more inclined to believe they have the capacity to deliver Best Value within existing resources compared with those from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perception about the capacity to deliver Best Value
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perception about the capacity to deliver Best Value
- Key variables – local authority structure/perceptions about the capacity to deliver Best Value
- Rationale – Is there a particular type of authority that feels it has the capacity to deliver Best Value within existing resources?
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 9,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 4.15. Stakeholders from Two Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to perceive the Emergency Management service can be improved by Best Value implementation compared with those from Single Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perception service can be improved by Best Value implementation
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perception service can be improved by Best Value implementation
- Key variables – local authority structure/perception of Emergency Management service improvements as a result of Best Value implementation
- Rationale – Under the two-tier system of local government there is potential uncertainty as to where the responsibility for Emergency Management lies. The Best Value Review process will ensure a fundamental challenge takes place which addressed questions such as – ‘Why is an Emergency Management service needed?’, ‘Why is the service provided in the way it currently is?’, ‘How could the service be provided in the future?’ etc. If these issues are discussed, considered and addressed as far as possible then it can be argued the Emergency Management service will be much improved.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.445, DF = 3,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 4.16. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to have an Emergency Management service working towards Best Value compared with Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and having service working towards Best Value
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and having service working towards Best Value
- Key variables – local authority structure/having service working towards Best Value
- Rationale – It is clear a Single Tier authority will have to undertake a Best Value Review of the Emergency Management service at some point in the five year cycle as they have sole responsibility for the service. Two Tier authorities may not be so sure where responsibility for the service rests, i.e. at County level, District level or both. Alternatively there could be instances where one Emergency Management service provider may be reviewed multiple times (by a Shire County, several Districts and perhaps a unitary) or not at all (each type of local authority may think the other is doing the Review).
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 3,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 4.17. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are more likely to believe the Emergency Management service is provided consistently across the U.K. compared with those from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and the perception Emergency Management services are provided consistently
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and the perception Emergency Management services are provided consistently
- Key variables – local authority structure/perception of Emergency Management service consistency
- Rationale – It is arguably clear where responsibility lies for Emergency Management within a Single Tier authority and that responsibility is more readily accepted and the work is undertaken. However, it is more uncertain within the Two Tier system. It is

possible these differences can influence the perceptions of Single and Two Tier authorities in relation to how they view the consistency of the Emergency Management services across the U.K.

Findings - P-Value = 0.022, DF = 6,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 4.18. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are possibly more likely to believe a national Unit supporting local authority Units would provide the most effective form of Emergency Management service compared with the views of those from Two Tier authorities.

$H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and the perception a national stand-alone Unit supporting local authority Units would provide the most effective service

$H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and the perception a national stand-alone Unit supporting local authority Units would provide the most effective service

Key variables – local authority structure/perception of a national Unit supporting local authority Units

Rationale – Following Local Government Re-organisation when many Shire County Councils, County Borough Councils and Regional Councils were broken up to create Single Tier unitary authorities, many former Emergency Management Units were disbanded and Officers redeployed to the new authorities. The former Emergency Planning Units consisted of multiple numbers of Officers with specialist knowledge areas. In comparison Single Tier authorities now tend to have only one dedicated Officer. This suggests Single Tier authorities cannot provide the breadth of service provided previously by central Units. Therefore it is likely Single Tier authorities could favour a national Unit providing support to them.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 9,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 4.19. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to believe a national Unit is unnecessary compared with those from Two Tier authorities.

$H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perceived need for a national Unit

$H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perceived need for a national Unit

Key variables – local authority structure/perceived need for national Unit

Rationale – It can be argued Two Tier authorities could feel more vulnerable in terms of the robustness and effectiveness of their Emergency Management procedures and as such would favour a national Unit providing the service.

Findings - P-Value = 0.020, DF = 9,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 4.20. Stakeholders from Two Tier authorities are possibly more likely to perceive a national stand-alone Unit, replacing all local authority Units, would provide the most effective service compared with those from Single Tier authorities.

$H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perception a national stand-alone Unit, replacing all local authority Units, would provide the most effective service



H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between local authority structure and perception a national stand-alone Unit, replacing all local authority Units, would provide the most effective service

Key variables – structure of local authority/perception of a national stand-alone Unit, replacing all local authority Units, as a means of providing most effective form of service

Rationale – It can be argued many Two Tier authorities are unsure where responsibility for Emergency Management rests. Removing Emergency Management from the Two Tier system and handing it to a national stand-alone Unit would potentially mean any current duplication of effort is stopped and that any current gaps in service delivery are filled. Single Tier authorities may feel differently as they provide all services for their area and could view Emergency Management being taken from them and being given to a stand-alone Unit as a dilution of their responsibility and blur their accountability with the local community.

Findings - P-value = 0.027, DF = 6, P<0.05 (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject H<sub>0</sub> – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 4.21. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to believe Emergency Management should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries than stakeholders from Two Tier authorities.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between local authority structure and perception of working boundaries

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between local authority structure and perception of working boundaries

Key variables – local authority structure/belief service should be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries

Rationale – Many Single Tier authorities have recently fought to obtain unitary status allowing them to be closer and more accountable to the communities they serve.

Therefore it is unlikely they would want to change their working boundaries.

Findings - P-Value = 0.306, DF = 6, P>0.05 (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept H<sub>0</sub> – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 4.22. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more inclined to believe Emergency Management should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries compared with those from Two Tier authorities.

H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between local authority structure and level of support for adopting wider regional boundaries for service delivery

H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between local authority structure and level of support for adopting wider regional boundaries for service delivery

Key variables – local authority structure/support for wider regional boundaries

Rationale – Many Single Tier authorities have individual Emergency Planning Officers rather than the teams of Officers found in many Shire Counties. With only one Officer it is arguably impossible to undertake all of the work required in order to provide an effective Emergency Management service, however, by pooling resources over a wider regional area economies of scale could be achieved, best practice shared and a more robust service provided.

Findings - P-Value = 0.074, DF = 6, P>0.05 (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 4.23. Stakeholders from Two Tier authorities are perhaps more inclined to believe Best Value can only be achieved if new civil protection legislation is introduced placing a statutory duty upon all compared with those from Single Tier authorities.

$H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and belief Best Value only achievable if new civil protection legislation enacted

$H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and belief Best Value only achievable if new civil protection legislation enacted

Key variables – local authority structure/perceived need for new civil protection legislation to achieve Best Value

Rationale – Single Tier authorities accept they have total responsibility for Emergency Management. However, the issue of acceptance of service responsibility is potentially not so clear within the two tier system. New civil protection legislation could state what is required of an authority in terms of providing a service, resolving the uncertainty surrounding the District/Shire County split within the Two Tier system.

Findings - P-Value = 0.004, DF = 9,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A strong significant association exists at the 1% level.

- 4.24. Stakeholders from Two Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to believe Emergency Management should be funded by a combination of central government specific grant and local authority contribution compared with those from Single Tier authorities.

$H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and the belief funding should be a combination of grant and local authority contribution

$H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and the belief funding should be a combination of grant and local authority contribution

Key variables – local authority structure/belief service should be funded by combination of grant and local authority contribution

Rationale – Two Tier authorities have seen a decline in their Grant allocation with many having to undertake income generation activities to make up the shortfall. However, Single Tier authorities have seen a steady increase in their level of Grant allocation.

Findings - P-Value = 0.563, DF = 9,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 4.25. Stakeholders from Two Tier authorities are perhaps more inclined to believe the current (1999/2000) Grant formula allocates money effectively compared with those from Single Tier authorities.

$H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perception of current Grant formula effectiveness

$H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perception of current Grant formula effectiveness

Key variables – local authority structure/perceived effectiveness of current Grant formula

Rationale – The 1999/2000 Grant formula allocated a greater amount of finance to Shire Counties (including a weighting of £14,000 per Shire District Council in the area) than to Unitary authorities.

Findings - P-Value = 0.015, DF = 6,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 4.26. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to believe the new Grant formula (2000/01 and 2001/02) will allocate money more effectively compared with those from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perceived effectiveness of new Grant formula
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perceived effectiveness of new Grant formula
- Key variables – local authority structure/perceived effectiveness of new Grant formula
- Rationale – Single Tier authorities Grant allocation will increase under the new Civil Defence Grant formula at the expense of Two Tier authorities allocations e.g. a Shire County will only receive a weighting of £10,000 per Shire District Council in their area.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion - Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 4.27. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more inclined to believe a national Inspectorate would raise the service's standard ensuring good practice was disseminated to all compared with those from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and level of support for national Inspectorate
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and level of support for national Inspectorate
- Key variables – local authority structure/perceived need for a national Inspectorate
- Rationale – The majority of Single Tier authorities have only one Emergency Management Officer. It can be argued that due to lack of legislation it is currently very unclear as to what this service should and should not entail. A national Emergency Management Inspectorate could ensure good practice was disseminated throughout all local authorities which would especially assist those authorities with fewer dedicated resources i.e. Single Tier authorities.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.013, DF = 9,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level
- 4.28. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to perceive Emergency Management as a service that must be delivered by local authority personnel compared with those from Two Tier authorities
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perception as to who should deliver the service
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perception as to who should deliver the service
- Key variables – structure of local authority/perception of who should deliver service
- Rationale – Two Tier authorities do not necessarily have in-house officers performing the service therefore it can be argued there is no difference between officers attached to another local authority performing the Emergency Management service on their behalf and personnel from another type of organization performing the service on their behalf.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.049, DF = 6,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 4.29. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are possibly more likely to believe the public need to have a voice in pre-planning for emergencies compared with those from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and level of support for the public having a say in pre-planning for emergencies
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and level of support for the public having a say in pre-planning for emergencies
- Key variables – local authority structure/perception of the public's role in pre-planning for emergencies
- Rationale – It is arguably easy for a Single Tier authority to identify its community and as a result there is no confusion on either the part of the local authority or the public as to who provides their services. In the Two Tier system not only is there the issue of who is actually responsible for providing the service but at what level should the consultation take place i.e. through Shire County or Shire District.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.003, DF = 6,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A strong significant association exists at the 1% level.
- 4.30. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more inclined to believe the public should have a role in to an emergency compared with those from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perceived role of the public in emergency response
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perceived role of the public in emergency response
- Key variables – local authority structure/perceived role of public in emergency response
- Rationale – Under the Single Tier system of local government it is arguably clearer to where the public should report to in the event of them assisting in emergency response. However, the reporting lines under the Two Tier system would not be so clear and without careful pre-planning and effective training, all requiring additional resources, great confusion could occur.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.001, DF = 6,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A strong significant association exists at the 1% level.
- 4.31. Stakeholders who perceive their Elected Members to be supportive of the service are perhaps less likely to believe a national stand-alone Unit, replacing all local authority Units, would provide a more effective Emergency Management service compared with those stakeholders who perceive Elected Members to be non-supportive of the service.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between perceived Elected Members support and belief national stand-alone Unit would provide most effective service
- $H_1$  - an association exists between perceived Elected Members support and belief national stand-alone Unit would provide most effective service
- Key variables – Perceived Elected Member support /level of support for national stand-alone Unit
- Rationale – Elected Members represent their local community in the local government management process. To be able to represent the local community effectively requires Elected Members to consult regularly with the community, this ensures decisions made reflect the feelings of the local community. A service provided by a national stand-alone Unit would mean decisions were made on a national basis and did not necessarily reflect the needs of the local community as perhaps identified via an Elected Members activities.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.393, DF = 4,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 4.32. Stakeholders from local authorities that are confident they provide a service reflecting local community needs are perhaps more likely to believe the service should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries compared with those who feel they do not provide a service reflective of local needs.

$H_0$  - no association exists between perception of providing a service reflecting local community needs and belief current administrative boundaries should continue

$H_1$  - an association exists between perception of providing a service reflecting local community needs and belief current administrative boundaries should continue

Key variables – level of confidence service reflects needs of local community/belief service should continue in-line with current administrative boundaries

Rationale – Those who already believe their service reflects local needs are perhaps likely to oppose larger boundaries because as the size of the local community increases so does their needs. The more needs, the more complex the planning process possibly to the point where not all needs can be fully considered and incorporated into Emergency Management arrangements resulting in arguably a less effective service.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 4,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion - Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 4.33. Stakeholders from local authorities that believe the service is provided to a consistent standard across the U.K. are perhaps more likely to believe the service should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries compared with those who feel the service is not provided consistently.

$H_0$  - no association exists between perception of service consistency and belief current administrative boundaries should continue

$H_1$  - an association exists between perception of service consistency and belief current administrative boundaries should continue

Key variables – perceived consistency of service delivery/belief service should be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries

Rationale – Can it be argued why change what already works?

Findings - P-Value = 0.144, DF = 4,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 4.34. Stakeholders from authorities that are not confident their service reflects local community needs are possibly more likely to believe it should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries compared with those who feel their service does reflect local needs

$H_0$  - no association exists between level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and belief wider regional boundaries should be adopted

$H_1$  - an association exists between level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and belief wider regional boundaries should be adopted

Key variables – confidence of existing Emergency Management service reflecting local needs/belief wider regional boundaries should be adopted

Rationale – Local authorities that are not confident their service reflects needs could feel wider regional boundaries could result in resources and expertise being pooled to gain

economies of scale (e.g. a regional callout scheme) and share best practice. This may lead to a more robust Emergency Management service.

Findings - P-Value = 0.001, DF = 4,  $P < 0.01$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A strong significant association exists at the 1% level.

- 4.35. Stakeholders from authorities that perceived Emergency Management is not provided consistently across the UK are possibly more likely to believe the service should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries compared with those who believe the service is delivered consistently.

$H_0$  - no association exists between perception of service consistency and belief wider regional boundaries should be adopted

$H_1$  - an association exists between perception of service consistency and belief wider regional boundaries should be adopted

Key variables – consistency of service delivery/belief service should be delivered to wider regional boundaries

Rationale – An Emergency Management service that works in-line with a wider regional boundary will cover a far greater area. This may enable resources and expertise to be pooled to ensure that a consistent approach covers wider area than at present.

Findings - P-Value = 0.036, DF = 4,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 4.36. Stakeholders from authorities that feel Emergency Management is integrated into their corporate aims and objectives are perhaps more likely to believe the service must be delivered by local authority personnel compared with those that do not believe the service is integrated.

$H_0$  - no association exists between perceived integration of service into corporate aims and objectives and belief local authority personnel must deliver the service

$H_1$  - an association exists between perceived integration of service into corporate aims/objectives and belief local authority personnel must deliver the service

Key variables – Perception Emergency Management is fully integrated into corporate aims and objectives/belief local authority personnel must deliver service

Rationale – A local authority that has managed to integrate Emergency Management into its corporate aims and objectives, are perhaps more likely to employ officers who have accepted responsibility for their roles in emergency response.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion - Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

**Hypothesis 5. The publics' level of awareness and understanding of the local authority  
Emergency Management service influences the effectiveness of the service.**

**Supporting Tests:**

- 5.1. Stakeholders from local authorities whose Chief Executive, or equivalent, has an explicit Emergency Management role included in their job description are perhaps more confident their local community is aware of the service compared with those from local authorities whose Chief Executive does not an explicit reference.  
H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between an explicit role in a Chief Executive's job description and perceived level of local community awareness of service  
H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between an explicit role in a Chief Executive's job description and perceived level of local community awareness of service  
Key variables – Explicit Emergency Management reference in Chief Executive's job description/perceived level of local community awareness of the service  
Rationale – A local authority with a Chief Executive who has a specific Emergency Management responsibility in their job description is perhaps more likely to take the service seriously including raising awareness of it with the local community.  
Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 2, P<0.001 (after uncertainties removed)  
Conclusion - Reject H<sub>0</sub> – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 5.2. Stakeholders from authorities whose Elected Members are perceived to be supportive of the Emergency Management service are possibly more confident their local community is aware of the service compared with those from local authorities who perceive Elected Members as being non-supportive.  
H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between perceived Elected Member support and levels of local community awareness of the service  
H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between perceived Elected Member support Management and levels of local community awareness of the service  
Key variables – Perceived Elected Member support /perceived level of local community awareness of the service  
Rationale – As Elected Members are local community representatives there is an argument if an Elected Member is supportive of a service they are more likely to inform the local community about it.  
Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6, P<0.001 (after uncertainties removed)  
Conclusion – Reject H<sub>0</sub> – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.
- 5.3. Local authorities with stakeholders who perceive Elected Members to be supportive of Best Value are possibly more likely to believe their local community is aware its council is actively seeking to involve them in policy decision-making compared with those who perceive Elected Members as non-supportive  
H<sub>0</sub> - no association exists between perceived Elected Member support for Best Value and perceived local community awareness of policy to involve them in decision-making  
H<sub>1</sub> - an association exists between perceived Elected Member support for Best Value and perceived local community awareness of policy to involve them in decision-making

Key variables – Perceived Elected Member support for Best Value/perceived local community awareness of policy to involve them in decision-making.

Rationale – If Elected Members are perceived to be supportive of Best Value this suggests they fully understand the principles of Best Value including the need to consult with, and involve, the local community in decision-making processes. As Elected Members are a local authority's direct link to the local community, if they support Best Value it is perhaps more likely they will already be consulting.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 4,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion - Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 5.4. Stakeholders from local authorities that indicate they are not confident their local community knows its council has a role to perform before, during and after an emergency are perhaps more likely to perceive the service can be improved by Best Value implementation compared with those from local authorities who believe their local community is already aware of the council's role in an emergency.

$H_0$  - no association exists between perceived level of local community Emergency Management role awareness and perceived service improvements from implementation of Best Value

$H_1$  - an association exists between perceived level of local community Emergency Management role awareness and perceived service improvements from implementation of Best Value

Key variables – perceived local community awareness of local authority's role before, during and after an emergency/perception of value of Best Value implementation in Emergency Management service

Rationale – A key element of Best Value is consultation with the local community about services provided. Such consultation would raise the local community's awareness of the council's role before, during and after an emergency.

Findings - P-Value = 0.874, DF = 2,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 5.5. Strategists who believe the public is unaware of the local authority's role before, during and after an emergency are perhaps more likely to believe Best Value will improve the service compared to operational staff who also believe the public is not aware.

$H_0$  - no association exists between type of respondent and belief Best Value will improve the service

$H_1$  - an association exists between type of respondent and belief Best Value will improve the service

Key variables – type of respondent/perception of value of Best Value implementation in Emergency Management.

Rationale – Do the perceptions of strategists and operational staff differ? This test may identify a particular type of respondent is more receptive to Best Value and has higher expectations of it.

Findings - P-Value = 0.993, DF = 2,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.



- 5.6. Stakeholders from local authorities that are not confident they provide a service reflecting the needs of its local community are perhaps more likely to believe it can be improved by the implementation of Best Value compared with the perceptions of those from local authorities that feel they do provide a service to meet local needs.

$H_0$  - no association exists between not providing a service reflecting community needs and the perception improvements can be achieved by implementation of Best Value

$H_1$  - an association exists between not providing a service reflecting community needs and the perception improvements can be achieved by implementation of Best Value

Key variables – confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the local community/perception the service can be improved by Best Value

Rationale – Local authorities which are not confident their existing Emergency Management service meets local community needs are possibly more likely to believe Best Value will result in a fundamental re-assessment of how the service is provided. Such a review should result in an improved service reflecting perceived local needs.

Findings - P-Value = 0.011, DF = 2,  $P < 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion - Reject  $H_0$  – A significant association exists at the 5% level.

- 5.7. Stakeholders from local authorities that are not confident their local community is aware its council has a role to perform before, during and after an emergency are perhaps more likely to have a service working towards Best Value compared with those from local authorities who feel their local community is aware of the emergency role.

$H_0$  - no association exists between perceived levels of local community awareness and having a service working towards Best Value

$H_1$  - an association exists between perceived levels of local community awareness and having a service working towards Best Value

Key variables – level of local community awareness of local authority's role before, during and after an emergency/having a service working towards Best Value

Rationale – Local authorities who are presently not confident their local community is aware of its emergency role are more likely to believe Best Value will offer the opportunity to consult with the public. Public awareness of the service can be raised as a result of Best Value.

Findings - P-Value = 0.968, DF = 2,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 5.8. Stakeholders from authorities that are not confident they provide a service reflecting the needs of the local community are possibly more likely to have a service working towards Best Value compared with those from authorities who feel they do provide a service reflecting local needs.

$H_0$  - no association exists between perceived levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and having a service working towards Best Value

$H_1$  - an association exists between perceived levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and having a service working towards Best Value

Key variables – perceived levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the local community/having a service working towards Best Value

Rationale – If a local authority believes its current Emergency Management service does not reflect local needs it is more likely to subject the service to Best Value sooner rather than later.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 3,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 5.9. Stakeholders from local authorities not confident their Emergency Management service reflects the needs of its local community are perhaps more likely to believe a national stand-alone Unit, replacing all local authority Units, would provide the most effective form of service delivery compared with those from local authorities that feel they do provide a service that reflects local community needs.

$H_0$  - no association exists between levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the local community and the perception a national stand-alone Unit would provide the most effective service

$H_1$  - an association exists between levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting the needs of the local community and the perception a national stand-alone Unit would provide most effective service

Key variables – levels of confidence in providing an Emergency Management service reflecting the needs of the community/ perception a national stand-alone Unit would provide most effective service

Rationale – Those who believe their service does not reflect the needs of the local community are acknowledging the service is not effective. A non-effective service is arguably of no use to either the authority or to the local community it serves. An Emergency Management service provided by a national stand-alone Unit, replacing all local authority Units, could mean decisions were made and implemented on a national basis resulting in a more professional service.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 4,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 5.10. Stakeholders from authorities that are not confident they provide a service reflecting the needs of the local community are perhaps more likely to believe a national Unit supporting local authority Units would provide the most effective form of service compared with those from local authorities that feel their existing service does reflect local community needs.

$H_0$  - no association exists between levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and the perception a national stand-alone Unit supporting local authority Units would provide the most effective service

$H_1$  - an association exists between levels of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and the perception a national stand-alone Unit supporting local authority Units would provide the most effective service

Key variables – level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs/perception a national Unit supporting local authority Units would provide the most effective service

Rationale – Those who believe they do not provide a service reflecting the needs of its local community could feel this way because they are unsure what the service should and should not include. A national supporting Unit could provide a clear sense of direction for local authority Units to follow.

Findings - P-Value = 0.156, DF = 6,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 5.11. Stakeholders from local authorities that are confident they provide a service reflecting the needs of its local community are potentially more likely to perceive there is no need for a national Unit compared with those from local authorities that feel their service does not reflect local community needs.

$H_0$  - no association exists between level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and perception there is no need for a national Unit

$H_1$  - an association exists between level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs and perception there is no need for a national Unit

Key variables – level of confidence in providing a service reflecting local community needs/perceived need for a national Unit

Rationale – Those who feel they are addressing the needs of their local community are perhaps less likely to see why an additional ‘layer’ should be created in the service delivery process, suggesting that they consider emergency response should remain at a local accountable level.

Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)

Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

- 5.12. Stakeholders from local authorities are confident their local community is aware its council provides an Emergency Management service are perhaps more likely to believe the public need to have a say in pre-planning for emergencies compared with those from authorities not confident their community is aware of the service.

$H_0$  - no association exists between levels of confidence in local community awareness of the service and the perceived belief the public need to have a say in pre-planning for emergencies

$H_1$  - an association exists between levels of confidence in local community awareness of the service and the perceived belief the public needs to have a say in pre-planning for emergencies

Key variables – levels of confidence in community awareness of the service/perception the public need a say in pre-planning for emergencies

Rationale – Those local authorities confident their local community is aware of the Emergency Management service are presumably basing such a judgement upon the knowledge the service has been promoted to the public or that the public has had first hand experience of using the service following an actual emergency. A local community that is already aware its council provides a service is perhaps also likely to have an appreciation of what the service entails (not necessarily in its entirety but the broad issues) and as a result they may be in a better position to express informed opinions and views.

Findings - P-Value = 0.169, DF = 6,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – no significant association exists.

- 5.13. Operational staff who are confident their local community is aware of the service are perhaps more likely to believe the public need a voice in pre-planning for emergencies compared with strategists who are confident of community awareness.

$H_0$  - no association exists between type of respondent and belief public need a voice in pre-planning

$H_1$  - an association exists between type of respondent and belief public need a voice in pre-planning

Key variables – type of respondent/perception public need a say in pre-planning for emergencies

Rationale – Do the opinions of strategists and operational staff differ? If differences do exist, then this could result in future conflict when considering public involvement.

Findings - P-Value = 0.623, DF = 4,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 5.14. Stakeholders from authorities that understand the principles of Best Value are potentially more likely to believe the public should have a say in pre-planning for emergencies compared with those from local authorities that do not understand Best Value principles.

$H_0$  - no association exists between level of understanding of Best Value principles and perceived belief the public need a voice in pre-planning for emergencies

$H_1$  - an association exists between level of understanding of Best Value principles and perceived belief the public need a voice in pre-planning for emergencies

Key variables – level of understanding of Best Value principles/perception public need an input into pre-planning for emergencies

Rationale – One of the main principles of Best Value is the requirement to consult with the local community. It is possible those who understand the principles will also feel the public should not only be consulted about the service but also have an input into it?

Findings - P-Value = 0.565, DF = 2,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 5.15. Stakeholders from authorities that believe it is necessary for local government to change its approach to decision making are perhaps more likely to also believe the public need a say in pre-planning for emergencies compared with those from local authorities who feel it is unnecessary to change decision making approaches.

$H_0$  - no association exists between perception change in local government decision making is necessary and belief the public need to have a say in pre-planning for emergencies

$H_1$  - an association exists between perception change in local government to decision making is necessary and belief the public need to have a say in pre-planning for emergencies

Key variables – perceived need for change in local government decision making/perception the public need a say in pre-planning for emergencies

Rationale – Local authorities that feel it is necessary to change decision making approaches in local government are perhaps more likely to believe that in future the voice of the local community should be heard and taken into consideration. If local authorities feel this way about decision making they are perhaps also inclined to feel the public should have a voice in actual service planning. This is a radical move away from how Emergency Management has been delivered in the past. It is very much a behind the scenes service only coming to the fore in times of emergency response.

Findings - P-Value = 0.088, DF = 2,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.

Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 5.16. Stakeholders from authorities that are confident their local community is aware of the service are perhaps more likely to believe the public should have a role to play in responding to an emergency as opposed to those from authorities not confident their community is aware of the service.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between perceived levels of confidence in local community awareness of the service and belief the public should have a role to play in response.
- $H_1$  - an association exists between perceived levels of confidence in local community awareness of the service and the belief public should have a role to play in response.
- Key variables – level of confidence the local community is aware of the service/ perception public should have role in emergency response
- Rationale – The perception local communities are aware of the Emergency Management service suggests either the service has been promoted and explained to the public or that members of the public have experienced first hand using the service during an actual emergency. It is possible if a local authority is confident its community is aware of the service they are also confident the aim of the service is understood (i.e. to protect the public). If a local authority has already informed its community about the service this suggests the authority has recognized the potential importance of community involvement in the service and as such they will be more receptive to the idea that the public should have a role to play in emergency response. .
- Findings - P-Value = 0.081, DF = 6,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 5.17. Stakeholders from authorities that feel it is necessary for local government to change its approach to service delivery are perhaps more likely to believe the public should have a role to play in responding to an emergency compared with those from authorities that consider change in local government service delivery is unnecessary.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between belief it is necessary for local government to change its approach to service delivery and perception the public should have a role to play in emergency response
- $H_1$  - an association exists between belief it is necessary for local government to change its approach to service delivery and perception the public should have a role to play in emergency response
- Key variables – belief change is necessary in service delivery/perception public should have role in emergency response
- Rationale – The perception change is necessary in local government service delivery suggests many local authorities believe they no longer have the resources to provide services in their entirety. For Emergency Management the level of Grant allocation has declined steadily over recent years and stocks of emergency resources previously held by local authorities are dwindling. This suggests local authorities are in favour of seeking additional assistance in service delivery. Can emergency response be improved if the local community can instigate self-help measures and play a part in emergency response?
- Findings - P-Value = 0.689, DF = 2,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.

- 5.18. Stakeholders from authorities that believe they fully understand Best Value principles are potentially more likely to believe Emergency Plans should be public documents compared with those from authorities that do not fully understand the principles.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between levels of understanding of Best Value principles and perception Emergency Plans should be public documents
- $H_1$  - an association exists between levels of understanding of Best Value principles and perception Emergency Plans should be public documents
- Key variables – level of understanding of Best Value principles/perception Emergency Plans should be public documents
- Rationale – Local authorities that understand Best Value principles will know public consultation and involvement in service delivery is a key requirement. Having Emergency Plans as public documents will ensure greater openness, and possibly understanding, surrounds a local authority Emergency Management service.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.506, DF = 4,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 5.19. Stakeholders from Single Tier authorities are perhaps more likely to believe Emergency Plans should be public documents compared with those from Two Tier authorities.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between local authority structure and perception Emergency Plans should be public documents
- $H_1$  - an association exists between local authority structure and perception Emergency Plans should be public documents
- Key variables – structure of local authority/perception Emergency Plans should be public documents
- Rationale – Single Tier authorities provide all services to their local community and therefore it can be argued they have a closer relationship with their public compared with a local authority operating in the Two Tier system. As a result of this ‘closeness’ a Single Tier authority is perhaps more likely to believe it should share information with its community, including having Emergency Plans as public documents.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.077, DF = 6,  $P > 0.05$  (after uncertainties removed) therefore significance at greater than 5% level.
- Conclusion - Accept  $H_0$  – There is insufficient evidence at the 5% level to suggest an association exists.
- 5.20. Stakeholders from authorities that perceive Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public are possibly more likely to believe Plans should be public documents compared with those from authorities that do not believe Plans would be more effective if understood by the public.
- $H_0$  - no association exists between perception Emergency Plans would be more effective if understood by public and the belief Plans should be public documents
- $H_1$  - an association exists between perception Emergency Plans would be more effective if understood by public and the belief Plans should be public documents
- Key variables – Perception Emergency Plans would be effective if understood by public/belief Emergency Plans should be public documents
- Rationale – If local authorities feel Emergency Plans could be more effective if they were understood by the public then such plans should be accessible to the public.
- Findings - P-Value = 0.000, DF = 6,  $P < 0.001$  (after uncertainties removed)
- Conclusion – Reject  $H_0$  – A very strong significant association exists at the 0.1% level.

**APPENDIX H – FINAL CODED QUESTIONNAIRE**

UNIVERSITY of  at NEWCASTLE  
NORTHUMBRIA

**Best Value  
Applied to Local Authority  
Emergency Planning**

**QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY**



## **Purpose of Study**

This study aims to determine how the Government's Best Value initiative can be applied to local authority Emergency Planning. The results of this study will provide valuable information to help enhance the future delivery of local authority Emergency Planning.

## **Confidentiality**

The information collected in this questionnaire will be treated in the strictest confidence. It will not be possible to identify the response of any individual local authority from the results produced.

## **General Instructions For Completion:**

1. This questionnaire is in five sections — please complete all.
2. Questions have been designed to keep completion time to a minimum.
3. Please use block print.
4. Please return the completed questionnaire in the reply-paid envelope provided.

If you have any queries about this study please do not hesitate to contact:

T Jane Ayre  
PO Box 3  
8 South Terrace  
DARLINGTON  
DL3 2YW

Telephone 0411 022895

**This study is fully approved by the Home Office and has the support of the following organisations:**

- Emergency Planning Society (EPS)



- Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)



## Section 1

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your response.

1.1. My position within the local authority is a:

- |  |                          |   |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| Chief Executive or equivalent.....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Councillor.....                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Best Value Manager or equivalent.....                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Chief Emergency Planning Officer or equivalent ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Other level of Emergency Planning Officer.....       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |

1.2. I am employed by a:

- |                                       |                          |   |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Shire County .....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Shire District/Borough.....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Unitary Authority.....                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| London Borough.....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Metropolitan Borough .....            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| Fire and Civil Defence Authority..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| Combined Fire Authority .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |

1.3. My local authority is located in:

- |               |                          |   |
|---------------|--------------------------|---|
| England.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Scotland..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Wales.....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |

## Section 2

### YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY'S APPROACH TO EMERGENCY PLANNING

Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your response.

2.1. Please indicate how your Emergency Planning service is provided:

- By in-house designated Emergency Planning Officer(s) ..... ☐ 1
- By Emergency Planning Officer(s) attached to other local authority ... ☐ → Go to 2.4. 2
- Other — please describe ..... ☐ → Go to 2.4. 3
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Uncertain ..... ☐ → Go to 2.4. 0

2.2. How many designated full-time equivalent Emergency Planning Officer(s) were/are/will be employed by your local authority in the following financial years?

1997/1998 \_\_\_\_\_

1998/1999 \_\_\_\_\_

1999/2000 \_\_\_\_\_

Uncertain ☐

2.3. Please give the job title of your Emergency Planning Officer(s) line manager within your local authority eg Chief Executive, Director of Social Services, Head of Environmental Health.

\_\_\_\_\_

Uncertain ☐

- 2.4. The amount of Civil Defence Grant which my local authority received/receives/will receive from the Home Office or Scottish Executive/Office is:

	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000
None as allocation goes direct to Shire County	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Up to £50,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
£ 50,000 to less than £100,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
£100,000 to less than £150,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
£150,000 to less than £200,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
£200,000 to less than £250,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
£250,000 to less than £300,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
£300,000 to less than £350,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
£350,000+ .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 0

- 2.5. The financial contribution which my local authority made/makes/will make to supplement the Civil Defence Grant is:

	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000
None .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Up to £10,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
£10,000 to less than £20,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
£20,000 to less than £50,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
£50,000 to less than £75,000 .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
£75,000+ .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 0

2.6. The level of elected member commitment which Emergency Planning in my local authority receives is:

- |   |                          |   |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| Non-supportive .....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Aware but no involvement .....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Supportive when required.....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Very supportive, takes active interest..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Uncertain .....                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

2.7. The level of Chief Officer commitment which Emergency Planning in my local authority receives is:

- |   |                          |   |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| Non-supportive .....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Aware but no involvement .....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Supportive when required.....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Very supportive, takes active interest..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Uncertain .....                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

2.8. Does the Chief Executive, or equivalent, of your local authority have an emergency planning role included in their job description?

- |                             |                          |   |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, role included .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, role not included ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

- 2.9. *"I believe Emergency Planning is fully integrated into the corporate aims and objectives of my local authority".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 2.10. *"I am confident my local community is aware that its local authority has a role to perform before, during and after an emergency".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 2.11. *"I am confident that my local community is aware that its local authority provides an Emergency Planning Service".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

2.12. *"I am confident my local authority provides an Emergency Planning service which reflects the needs of its local community".*

- |                         |                          |   |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Strongly Agree .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Agree.....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |
| Disagree .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |



### Section 3

## YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY'S RESPONSE TO BEST VALUE

Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your response.

3.1. *"I am aware of the Best Value initiative".*

Yes, I am aware ..... ☐ 1

No, I am not aware ..... ☐ 2

3.2. *"I understand the principles of the Best Value initiative".*

Strongly Agree ..... ☐ 1

Agree..... ☐ 2

Uncertain ..... ☐ 0

Disagree ..... ☐ 3

Strongly Disagree ..... ☐ 4

English and Welsh Respondents → Go to 3.3.

Scottish Respondents → Go to 3.4.

3.3. Generally how do you feel relations between central and local government have changed since the Labour Government was elected in May 1997?

Relations improved..... ☐ → Go to 3.5. 1

Relations remained the same as before May 1997..... ☐ → Go to 3.5. 2

Relations declined..... ☐ → Go to 3.5. 3

Uncertain ..... ☐ → Go to 3.5. 0

3.4. Do you feel that the establishment of the new Scottish Parliament will improve relations between central and local government in Scotland?

- |                                      |                          |   |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Relations will improve .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Relations will remain the same ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Relations will decline .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Uncertain .....                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

3.5. Generally do you think it is necessary for local government to change its approach to decision making?

- |                                   |                          |   |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, change is necessary .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, change is not necessary ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

3.6. Do you feel Best Value will enhance local government's decision making?

- |                            |                          |   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, will improve .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, will not improve ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

3.7. Generally do you think it is necessary for local government to change its approach to service delivery?

- |                                   |                          |   |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, change is necessary .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, change is not necessary ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

3.8. Do you feel Best Value will enhance local government's service delivery?

- |                            |                          |   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, will improve .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, will not improve ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

3.9. Do you think Best Value will assist in improving relations between central and local government?

- Yes, will improve relations ..... ☐ 1
- No, will not improve relations ..... ☐ 2
- Uncertain ..... ☐ 0

3.10. Do you think Best Value differs radically from Compulsive Competitive Tendering (CCT)?

- Yes, Best Value differs radically ..... ☐ 1
- No, Best Value does not differ radically ..... ☐ 2
- Uncertain ..... ☐ 0

Comment (if any):

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**English and Welsh Respondents → Go to 3.11.**

**Scottish Respondents → Go to 3.15.**

3.11. Did your local authority submit a Best Value pilot proposal?

- Yes, did submit pilot ..... ☐ 1
- No, did not submit pilot ..... ☐ → Go to 3.13. 2
- Uncertain ..... ☐ → Go to 3.13. 0

3.12. The remit of my local authority's Best Value pilot proposal was:

- Whole organisation approach ..... ☐ 1
- Corporate issue(s) approach ..... ☐ Please specify issue(s) below: 2
- Specific service approach..... ☐ Please specify service(s) below: 3
- Uncertain..... ☐ 0

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3.13. The outcome of my local authority's Best Value pilot proposal was:

- It was selected as a Best Value pilot authority ..... ☐ → Go to 3.15. 1
- It was selected as a reserve Best Value pilot authority..... ☐ → Go to 3.15. 2
- It was not selected..... ☐ 3
- Uncertain..... ☐ 0

3.14. Is your local authority adopting Best Value ahead of legislation?

- Yes, adopting Best Value ahead of legislation..... ☐ 1
- No, not adopting Best Value ahead of legislation..... ☐ → Go to 3.17. 2
- Unsure ..... ☐ 0

3.15. Has your local authority appointed a dedicated Best Value Officer(s)?

- Yes, dedicated Best Value Officer appointed ..... ☐ → Go to 3.17. 1
- No, dedicated Best Value Officer not appointed ..... ☐ 2
- Uncertain ..... ☐ 0

- 3.16. Have Best Value responsibilities been assigned to an Officer(s) in your local authority with other responsibilities?

Yes, assigned to existing Officer(s) ..... ☐ 1  
 No, not assigned to existing Officer(s) ..... ☐ 2  
 Uncertain ..... ☐ 0

- 3.17. Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statement.

*"Elected members in my local authority fully support Best Value".*

Strongly Agree ..... ☐ 1  
 Agree ..... ☐ 2  
 Uncertain ..... ☐ 0  
 Disagree ..... ☐ 3  
 Strongly Disagree ..... ☐ 4

- 3.18. What mechanisms has your local authority got in place to involve elected members in Best Value?

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None ☐ 1  
 Uncertain ☐ 0

- 3.19. Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statement.

*"Chief Officers in my local authority fully support Best Value".*

- |                         |                          |   |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Strongly Agree .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Agree.....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |
| Disagree .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |

- 3.20. Do you think you receive enough quality information about Best Value from central government sources eg Department of Environment, Transport and Regions (DETR); Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) etc?

- |                                   |                          |   |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, I receive enough .....       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, I do not receive enough ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

- 3.21. Do you think enough quality information about Best Value is disseminated throughout your local authority?

- |                                   |                          |   |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, I receive enough.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, I do not receive enough ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

- 3.22. Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statement.

*"My local authority has the capacity to deliver Best Value within existing resources".*

- |                         |                          |   |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Strongly Agree .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Agree.....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |
| Disagree .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |

Comment (if any):

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- 3.23. My local authority uses the following quality management model(s):

- |                                    |                          |   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Balanced Scorecard.....            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| BS5750 .....                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Business Excellence Model.....     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Charter Mark .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Investors In People .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| ISO9000 .....                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| Unsure .....                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |
| None .....                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |
| Other — please specify below ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 |

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- 3.24. Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statement.

*"I am confident that my local community is aware that its local authority is actively seeking to involve them in policy decision-making".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4



## Section 4

### BEST VALUE IN EMERGENCY PLANNING

Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your response.

4.1. Do you believe local authority Emergency Planning can be improved by the implementation of Best Value?

- |                              |                          |   |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, can be improved .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, cannot be improved ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

4.2. Is your local authority's Emergency Planning service working towards Best Value?

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, is working .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| No, is not working ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

English and Welsh Respondents → Go to 4.3.

Scottish Respondents → Go to 4.4.

4.3. When will your local authority's Emergency Planning service be addressed in the Best Value Programme of Performance Reviews?

- |                 |                          |   |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---|
| Year 1 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Year 2 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Year 3 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Year 4 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Year 5 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| Uncertain ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

4.4. When will/was your local authority's Emergency Planning Service be addressed/was addressed in the Best Value Programme of Service Reviews?

- |                 |                          |   |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---|
| Year 1 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Year 2 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Year 3 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Year 4 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Year 5 .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| Uncertain ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |

4.5. Which of the following organisations will you be seeking advice from when applying Best Value to Emergency Planning?

- |  |                          |    |
|--|--------------------------|----|
| Home Office .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1  |
| Scottish Executive .....                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2  |
| Improvement and Development Agency .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3  |
| Local Government Association (LGA) .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4  |
| Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) .....     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5  |
| Audit Commission .....                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6  |
| Accounts Commission .....                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7  |
| Emergency Planning Society (EPS) .....                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8  |
| Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9  |
| Other — please specify .....                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 |

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- |                 |                          |    |
|-----------------|--------------------------|----|
| None .....      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 |
| Uncertain ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0  |

Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. These statements seek to determine your views on working boundaries, legislation, funding, quality standards and public consultation in local authority Emergency Planning.

- 4.6. *"I believe that local authority emergency planning is provided to a consistent standard across England, Scotland and Wales".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.7. *"Emergency Planning arrangements in England, Scotland and Wales should be capable of dovetailing together regardless of differences in national and local laws and customs".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.8. *"A national stand alone Emergency Planning Unit, replacing all local authority Emergency Planning Units, would provide the most effective form of Emergency Planning".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.9. *"A national Emergency Planning Unit supporting local authority Emergency Planning Units would provide the most effective form of Emergency Planning".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.10. *"There is no need for a national Emergency Planning Unit".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.11. *"Local authority Emergency Planning should continue to be delivered in-line with current administrative boundaries".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.12. *"Local authority emergency planning should be delivered in accordance with wider regional boundaries than the current administrative boundaries used".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.13. *"Best Value can only be achieved in Emergency Planning if new civil protection legislation is introduced placing a statutory duty upon all local authorities".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.14. *"Emergency Planning should be funded solely by central government specific grant".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.15. *"Emergency Planning should be funded solely by the local authority".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.16. *"Emergency Planning should be funded by a combination of central government specific grant and local authority contribution".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.17. *"The current level of central government specific grant for emergency planning is sufficient for local authorities to provide an effective emergency planning service".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.18. *"The current (1999/2000) Civil Defence Grant formula allocates money effectively to local authorities".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.19. *"The new formula for Civil Defence Grant formula (2000/01 and 2001/02) will allocate money effectively to local authorities".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.20. *"The Civil Defence Grant formula should arise from a Risk/Benefit Analysis".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.21. *"External funding and sponsorship should play a greater role in Emergency Planning provision in the future".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.22. *"A national Emergency Planning Inspectorate would raise the service's standard and ensure that good practice was disseminated to all local authorities".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.23. *"National Emergency Planning performance indicators are an integral part of raising the service's standard".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.24. *"Emergency planning is a service which must be delivered by local authority personnel".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	→ Go to 4.26.	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	→ Go to 4.26.	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	→ Go to 4.26.	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>		3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>		4

- 4.25. Please describe below how Emergency Planning could be delivered other than by local authority personnel.

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- 4.26. *"The general public need to have a say in pre-planning for emergencies".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.27. *"The general public should have a role to play in responding to an emergency".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

- 4.28. *"Emergency Plans would be more effective if they were understood by the public".*

Strongly Agree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Uncertain .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	0
Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Strongly Disagree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	4



## 4.29. "Emergency Plans should be public documents".

- |                         |                          |   |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Strongly Agree .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| Agree.....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Uncertain .....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0 |
| Disagree .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |

4.30. Please identify from the list below the 3 main benefits which you hope can be achieved by Best Value in local authority Emergency Planning. Place 1 in the box for the greatest benefit, 2 for the second benefit etc.

- |   |                          |    |
|---|--------------------------|----|
| ● Improved quality of service.....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1  |
| ● Opportunity for innovation .....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2  |
| ● Opportunity for continuous improvement .....            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3  |
| ● Developing partnerships.....                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4  |
| ● Opportunity to influence government policy making ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5  |
| ● Learning from other local authority approaches .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6  |
| ● Improving cost effectiveness .....                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7  |
| ● Raising professionalism of Emergency Planning .....     | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8  |
| ● Providing services that respond to public needs .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9  |
| ● Increased public involvement .....                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 |
| ● Uncertain .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 0  |
| ● Other: .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 |

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4.31. Please identify from the list below the 3 issues which you believe will be the biggest constraints to local authority Emergency Planning successfully adopting Best Value. Place 1 in the box for the biggest threat, 2 for the second biggest etc.

- Lack of national quality standards for Emergency Planning ..... ☐ 1
- Lack of Emergency Planning Inspectorate ..... ☐ 2
- Inconsistent working boundaries ..... ☐ 3
- Decreasing Civil Defence Grant ..... ☐ 4
- Lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Planning Officers ..... ☐ 5
- Lack of understanding of Best Value by Elected Members ..... ☐ 6
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Planning by Best Value Managers ..... ☐ 7
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Planning by Chief Executives ..... ☐ 8
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Planning by Elected Members ..... ☐ 9
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Planning by the public ..... ☐ 10
- Lack of competition in Emergency Planning provision ..... ☐ 11
- Lack of Emergency Planning legislation ..... ☐ 12
- Best Value not being applied across the public sector ..... ☐ 13
- Greater accountability to the public ..... ☐ 14
- Uncertain ..... ☐ 0
- Other: ..... ☐ 15

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- 4.32. If there are any aspects of Best Value in relation to Emergency Planning which you consider important and which are not covered here then please give your comments in the space provided below.

Comment(s):

[illegible]

## Section 5

### RESPONDENT'S DETAILS

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. It would be helpful, though not essential, if you could provide the following information. Please note that your responses contained in this questionnaire will be kept strictly CONFIDENTIAL as results of the study will be reported in aggregate form only.

Your name (in print): \_\_\_\_\_

Your job title (in print): \_\_\_\_\_

Local Authority (in print): \_\_\_\_\_

Your telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please ✓ the box if you would like to receive a summary of the survey findings..... ☐

Please ✓ the box if you are prepared to take part in a possible follow-up survey ..... ☐

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION**

**Please return the questionnaire in the reply paid envelope provided**

---

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

DATE REPLY RECEIVED : \_\_\_\_\_

DATE PROCESSED: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX I – COVERING LETTERS**

University Letterhead

(0411) 022895

10 September 1999

Dear <Title> <LastName>

Best Value National Survey

I am currently researching the issue of Best Value applied to local authority Emergency Planning. As part of this research I am undertaking a survey which seeks to determine the views of all local authority Chief Executives, or equivalent, in England, Scotland and Wales in relation to how Emergency Planning is currently provided, how service delivery could be improved and what the implications of Best Value are likely to be. This survey has the full support of the Home Office, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) and the Emergency Planning Society (EPS).

I would be grateful if you could participate in this survey by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the pre-paid envelope provided by 15 December 1999. The questionnaire has been designed so that completion time is kept to a minimum. The information collected in this survey will be treated in the strictest confidence, it will not be possible to identify the response of any individual local authority from the results produced. I will send a summary of the aggregate findings to all survey participants.

A copy of the questionnaire has also been sent to your local authority's Best Value Officer, Emergency Planning Officer(s) and Chair of your elected member committee dealing with Emergency Planning in order to determine their views.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this survey.

Yours sincerely

T Jane Ayre

Enc

<Title> <FirstName> <LastName> <PostNominals>  
<Job Title>  
<Company>  
<Address1>  
<Address2>  
<City>  
<State>

University Letterhead

(0411) 022895

10 September 1999

Dear <Title> <LastName>

Best Value National Survey

I am currently researching the issue of Best Value applied to local authority Emergency Planning. As part of this research I am undertaking a survey which seeks to determine the views of all local authority Best Value Officers, or equivalent, in England, Scotland and Wales in relation to how Emergency Planning is currently provided, how service delivery could be improved and what the implications of Best Value are likely to be. This survey has the full support of the Home Office, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) and the Emergency Planning Society (EPS).

I would be grateful if you could participate in this survey by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the pre-paid envelope provided by 15 December 1999. The questionnaire has been designed so that completion time is kept to a minimum. The information collected in this survey will be treated in the strictest confidence, it will not be possible to identify the response of any individual local authority from the results produced. I will send a summary of the aggregate findings to all survey participants.

I obtained your contact details when I telephoned your authority's main switchboard and asked for the name and job title of the officer taking a corporate overview of Best Value. If, however, you do not undertake this role I would be grateful if you could pass this letter and its enclosures to the relevant officer.

A copy of the questionnaire has also been sent to your local authority's Chief Executive, Emergency Planning Officer(s) and Chair of your elected member committee dealing with Emergency Planning in order to determine their views.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this survey.

Yours sincerely

<Title> <FirstName> <LastName> <PostNominals>

<Job Title>

<Company>

T Jane Ayre

<Address1>

<Address2>

Enc

<City>

<State>



University Letterhead

(0411) 022895

10 September 1999

Dear <Title> <LastName>

Best Value National Survey

I am currently researching the issue of Best Value applied to local authority Emergency Planning. As part of this research I am undertaking a survey which seeks to determine the views of all local authority Emergency Planners in England, Scotland and Wales in relation to how Emergency Planning is currently provided, how service delivery could be improved and what the implications of Best Value are likely to be. This survey has the full support of the Home Office, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) and the Emergency Planning Society (EPS).

I would be grateful if you could participate in this survey by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the pre-paid envelope provided by 15 December 1999. The questionnaire has been designed so that completion time is kept to a minimum. The information collected in this survey will be treated in the strictest confidence, it will not be possible to identify the response of any individual local authority from the results produced. I will send a summary of the aggregate findings to all survey participants.

A copy of the questionnaire has also been sent to your local authority's Chief Executive, Best Value Officer and Chair of your elected member committee dealing with Emergency Planning in order to determine their views.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this survey.

Yours sincerely

<Title> <FirstName> <LastName> <PostNominals>

<Job Title>

<Company>

T Jane Ayre

<Address1>

<Address2>

Enc

<City>

<State>

University Letterhead

(0411) 022895

10 September 1999

Dear Councillor <LastName>

Best Value National Survey

I am currently researching the issue of Best Value applied to local authority Emergency Planning. As part of this research I am undertaking a survey of elected members in England, Scotland and Wales who chair committees with responsibility for Emergency Planning. This survey seeks to determine views on how Emergency Planning is currently provided, how service delivery could be improved and what the implications of Best Value are likely to be. This survey has the full support of the Home Office, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) and the Emergency Planning Society (EPS).

I would be grateful if you could participate in this survey by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the pre-paid envelope provided by 15 December 1999. The questionnaire has been designed so that completion time is kept to a minimum. The information collected in this survey will be treated in the strictest confidence, it will not be possible to identify the response of any individual local authority from the results produced. I will send a summary of the aggregate findings to all survey participants.

A copy of the questionnaire has also been sent to your local authority's Chief Executive, Emergency Planning Officer(s) and Best Value Officer in order to determine their views.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this survey.

Yours sincerely

<Title> <FirstName> <LastName> <PostNominals>

<Job Title>

<Company>

T Jane Ayre

<Address1>

<Address2>

Enc

<City>

<State>

## **APPENDIX J – RESPONSE TESTS**

#### All By Geographical/Structural Location

	English Two Tier	English Single Tier	Scottish Unitary	Welsh Unitary	Total
Resp	363	152	71	44	630
Non-resp	693	298	73	62	1126
Total	1056	450	144	106	1756

P-value 0.0021 1% level

#### All By Job Function

	Elected Member	Chief Executive	Best Value Manager	Emergency Management Prof.	Total
Resp	69	111	146	304	630
Non-resp	372	330	295	129	1126
Total	441	441	441	433	1756

P-value 0.0000 0.1% level

#### Chief Executives By Location

	English Two Tier	English Single Tier	Scottish Unitary	Welsh Unitary	Total
Resp	69	25	9	8	111
Non-resp	203	90	23	14	330
Total	272	115	32	22	441

P-value 0.5056 not-sig

#### Best Value Managers By Location

	English Two Tier	English Single Tier	Scottish Unitary	Welsh Unitary	Total
Resp	80	38	18	10	146
Non-resp	192	77	14	12	295
Total	272	115	32	22	441

P-value 0.0121 5% level

### Emergency Management Professionals By Location

	English Two Tier	English Single Tier	Scottish Unitary	Welsh Unitary	Total
Resp	180	65	37	22	304
Non-resp	60	40	11	18	129
Total	240	105	48	40	433
P-value 0.0089 1% level					

### Elected Members By Location

	English Two Tier	English Single Tier	Scottish Unitary	Welsh Unitary	Total
Resp	34	24	7	4	69
Non-resp	238	91	25	18	372
Total	272	115	32	22	441
P-value 0.1407 Not sig					

### English Single Tier By Job Function

	Elected Member	Chief Executive	Best Value Manager	Emergency Management Prof.	Total
Resp	24	25	38	65	152
Non-resp	91	90	77	40	298
Total	115	115	115	105	450
P-value 0.0000 0.1% level					

### English Two Tier By Job Function

	Elected Member	Chief Executive	Best Value Manager	Emergency Management Prof.	Total
Resp	34	69	80	180	363
Non-resp	238	203	192	60	693
Total	272	272	272	240	1056
P-value 0.0000 0.1% level					

### Welsh Unitary By Job Function

	Elected Member	Chief Executive	Best Value Manager	Emergency Management Prof.	Total
Resp	4	8	10	22	44
Non-resp	18	14	12	18	62
Total	22	22	22	40	106
P-value 0.0400 5% level					

### Scottish Unitary By Job Function

	Elected Member	Chief Executive	Best Value Manager	Emergency Management Prof.	Total
Resp	7	9	18	37	71
Non-resp	25	23	14	11	73
Total	32	32	32	48	144
P-value 0.0000 0.1% level					

**APPENDIX K – FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE**

## Is Best Value Achievable In Local Government? A Case Study Of Emergency Planning

*Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your response.*

1. Was your Emergency Planning service subjected to a Best Value Review in either the financial year 2000/01 or before?

Yes, it was subjected to a Best Value Review ☐

No, it was not subjected to a Best Value Review ☐

*If your response is 'Yes' please go to Question 2.*

*If your response is 'No' please go to Question 3.*

2. Do you believe that your Emergency Planning service has been improved as a result of undertaking a Best Value Review?

Yes, the Emergency Planning service has improved ☐

No, the Emergency Planning service has not improved ☐

3. Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please complete your contact details as follows:

Your name (in print): \_\_\_\_\_

Your job title (in print): \_\_\_\_\_

Local Authority (in print): \_\_\_\_\_

Your telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_



Purpose of Study:

This study aims to re-assess perceptions of Best Value among those local authorities who have subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review. The results of this study will provide valuable information to help enhance the future delivery of local authority Emergency Planning.

Confidentiality:

The information collected in this questionnaire will be treated in the strictest confidence. It will not be possible to identify the response of any individual local authority from the results produced.

*Please ✓ tick the box if you would like to receive a summary of survey findings:* ☐

*Please ✓ tick the box if you are prepared to take part in a possible further research:* ☐

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT WITH THIS  
RESEARCH.**

**Please return the questionnaire in the reply paid envelope provided.**

If you have any queries about this research please do not hesitate to contact:

T Jane Ayre

Tel. No: 07711 022895

E-mail: [jayre@ddfra.co.uk](mailto:jayre@ddfra.co.uk)

---

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Date processed: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX L – COVERING LETTER ACCOMPANYING FOLLOW-  
UP QUESTIONNAIRE**

Date as postmark

Dear <Title> <LastName>

In September 1999 you kindly completed a questionnaire I sent to you entitled "Best Value Applied To Local Authority Emergency Planning", the aim of which was to determine your initial perceptions of Best Value in relation to Emergency Planning. In your response you indicated that you would be willing to participate in follow-up research. As Best Value is now a statutory duty, and that your Emergency Planning service may have been subjected to a Best Value Review, I am keen to re-assess perceptions as part of my on-going research to determine whether Best Value is achievable in local authority Emergency Planning.

I would be very grateful if you could spare a few minutes to answer the three questions on the attached questionnaire and return them to me in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope by Monday 29 October 2001.

Thank you for your continued support in this research. As with my previous research I will keep you informed of the findings.

Yours sincerely

T Jane Ayre

Enc

<Title> <FirstName> <LastName>  
<Job Title>  
<Company>  
<Address 1>  
<Address 2>  
<City>  
<State>

**APPENDIX M – INITIAL FINDINGS FROM FOLLOW-UP  
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY**

**Is Best Value Achievable In Local  
Government? A Case Study Of Local  
Authority Emergency Planning.**

**INITIAL FINDINGS FROM FOLLOW-UP  
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY**

**T Jane Ayre**

**University of Northumbria at Newcastle**

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## **Section 1**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In September 1999 a questionnaire was distributed to determine how the Government's Best Value initiative could be applied to local authority Emergency Planning. The questionnaire was distributed to Chief Executives, Best Value Managers, Emergency Planning Professionals and Elected Members in every local authority in England, Scotland and Wales in order to obtain the perceptions of all stakeholders. This survey had the full support of the Home Office, the Emergency Planning Society (EPS) and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

A high response rate was achieved. Analysis of the data collected indicated that local authority structure, geographical location and funding levels were some of the key influences upon not only how the Emergency Planning service was delivered but also upon the perceptions of the likely impact of Best Value being applied to the service.

Best Value is now, in England and Wales, a statutory duty. A number of local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales have now already subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review.

In October 2001 a follow-up questionnaire was distributed to those original questionnaire responders who indicated that they were either a) subjecting their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in 2000/01 and were willing to take part in follow-up research or b) were willing to take part in follow-up research but were uncertain when their Emergency Planning service would be subjected to a Best Value Review. The purpose of this follow-up was to identify the current perceptions of responders whose Emergency Planning service has already been subjected to a Best Value Review.

### **Distribution Of Follow-up Questionnaires**

130 follow-up questionnaires were distributed to:

- The 24 respondents who indicated they would be subjecting their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One (and were willing to take part in follow-up research)
- The 106 respondents who indicated they were uncertain which year their Emergency Planning service was to be subjected to a Best Value Review (and were willing to take part in follow-up research)

Figure 1 summarises the distribution of follow-up questionnaires.

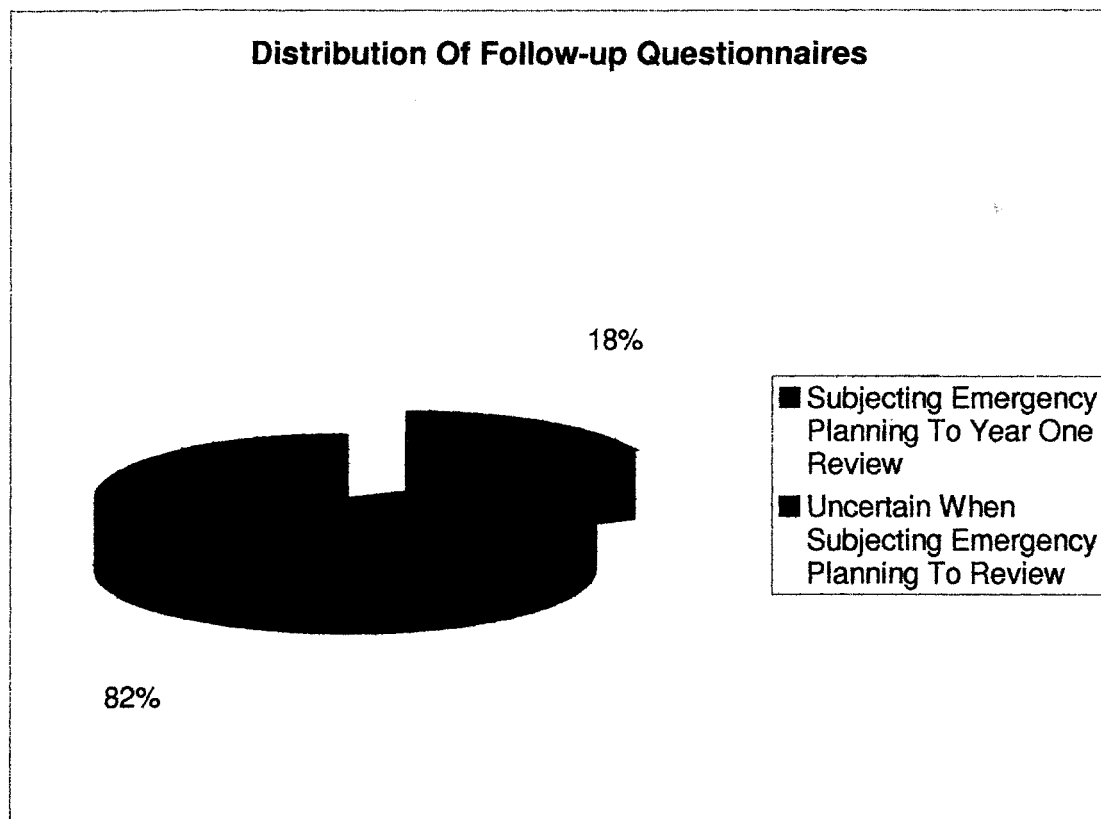


Figure 1: Distribution of Follow-up Questionnaires



### **Response To Follow-up Questionnaires:**

90 responses were received ie a 69% response rate. The responses were as follows:

- 17 respondents indicated that their Emergency Planning service was subjected to a Best Value Review in Year One (ie 2000/01)
- 73 respondents indicated that their Emergency Planning service had not been subjected to a Best Value Review in Year One (ie 2000/01).

Figure 2 summarises the follow-up questionnaire response.

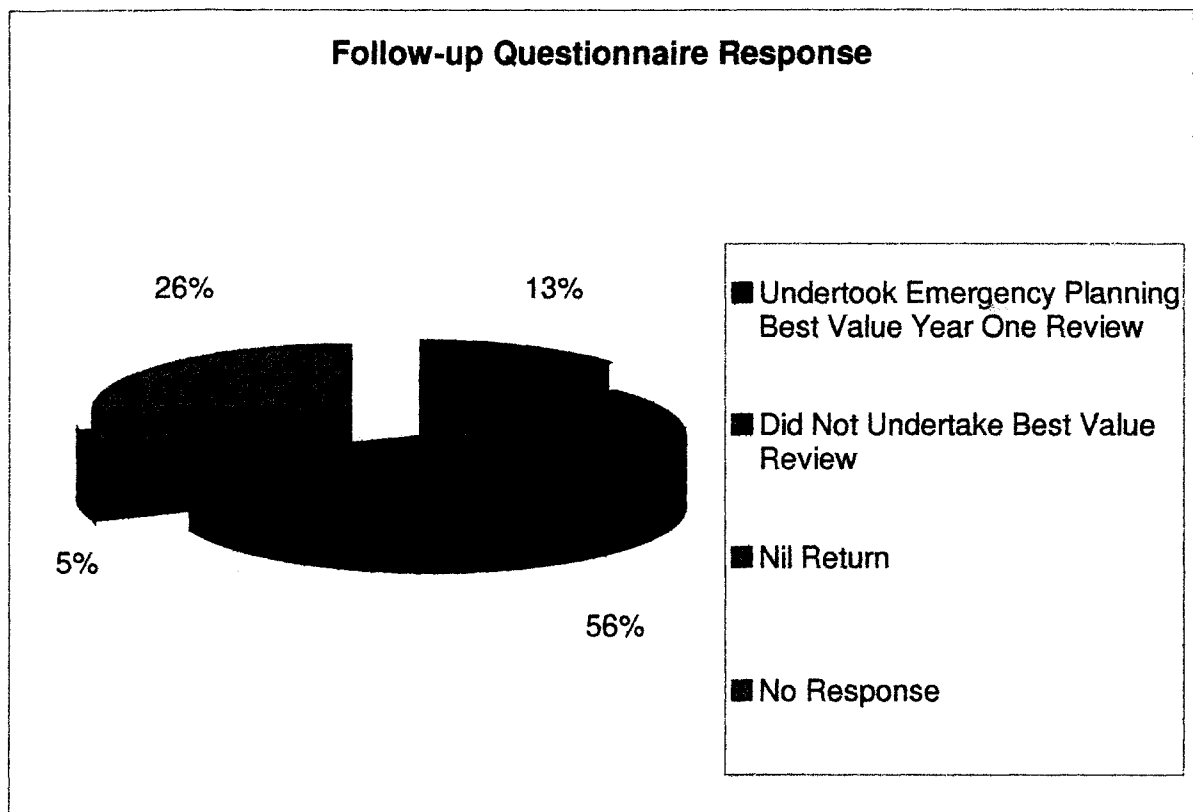


Figure 2: Follow-up Questionnaire Response

### Make-up Of Questionnaire Respondents (By Local Authority Type)

The make-up of the respondents, by local authority type, was as follows:

- 19 respondents were from English Single Tier local authorities
- 51 respondents were from English Two Tier local authorities
- 6 respondents were from Welsh Unitaries
- 14 respondents were from Scottish Unitaries

Figure 3 summarises the make-up of questionnaire respondent by local authority type

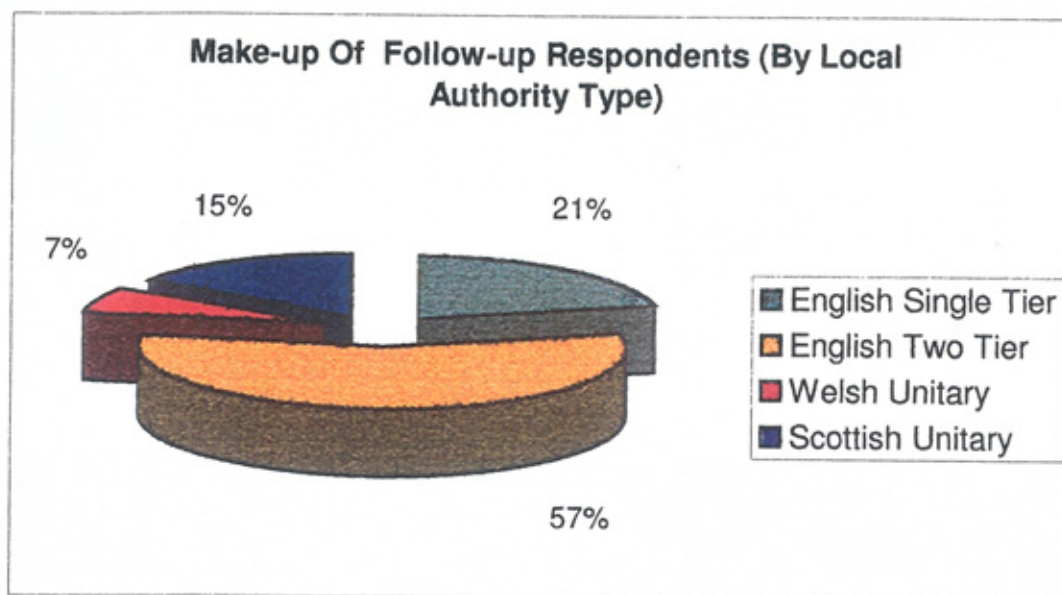


Figure 3: Make-up Of Respondents (By Local Authority Type)

### Make-up Of Questionnaire Respondents (By Post Holder)

The make-up of the respondents, by post holder, was as follows:

- 8 respondents were Chief Executives (or equivalent)
- 23 respondents were Best Value Managers (or equivalent)
- 53 respondents were Emergency Planning professionals
- 6 respondents were Elected Members

Figure 4 summarises the make-up of questionnaire respondent by post holder.

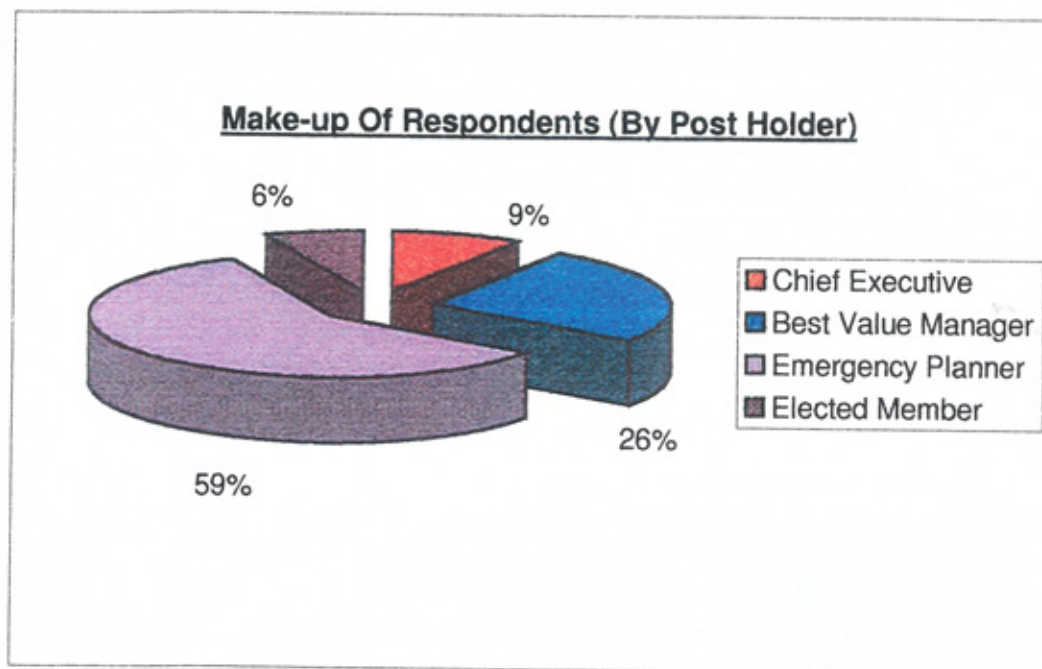


Figure 4: Make-up Of Respondents (By Post Holder)

The remainder of this paper presents the initial findings from the follow-up survey and details the remaining work to be undertaken in order to complete this research.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your participation in this follow-up survey and your on-going support with this research. The final results of this research will provide valuable information to help enhance the future delivery of local authority Emergency Planning.

If you have any queries about this study please do not hesitate to contact:

T Jane Ayre

Telephone: 07711 022895

E-mail: [jayre@ddfra.co.uk](mailto:jayre@ddfra.co.uk)

## Section 2 INITIAL FINDINGS

### Number of Local Authorities Which Subjected Their Emergency Planning Service To A Best Value Review Year One

In September 1999 24 respondents indicated their Emergency Planning service would be subjected to a Best Value Review in Year One ie 2000/01. An additional 106 respondents indicated that they were uncertain in which year their Emergency Planning service would be subjected to a Best Value Review.

Analysis of the October 2001 follow-up questionnaires found that only 17 respondents had actually subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review.

Figure 5 summarises this information.

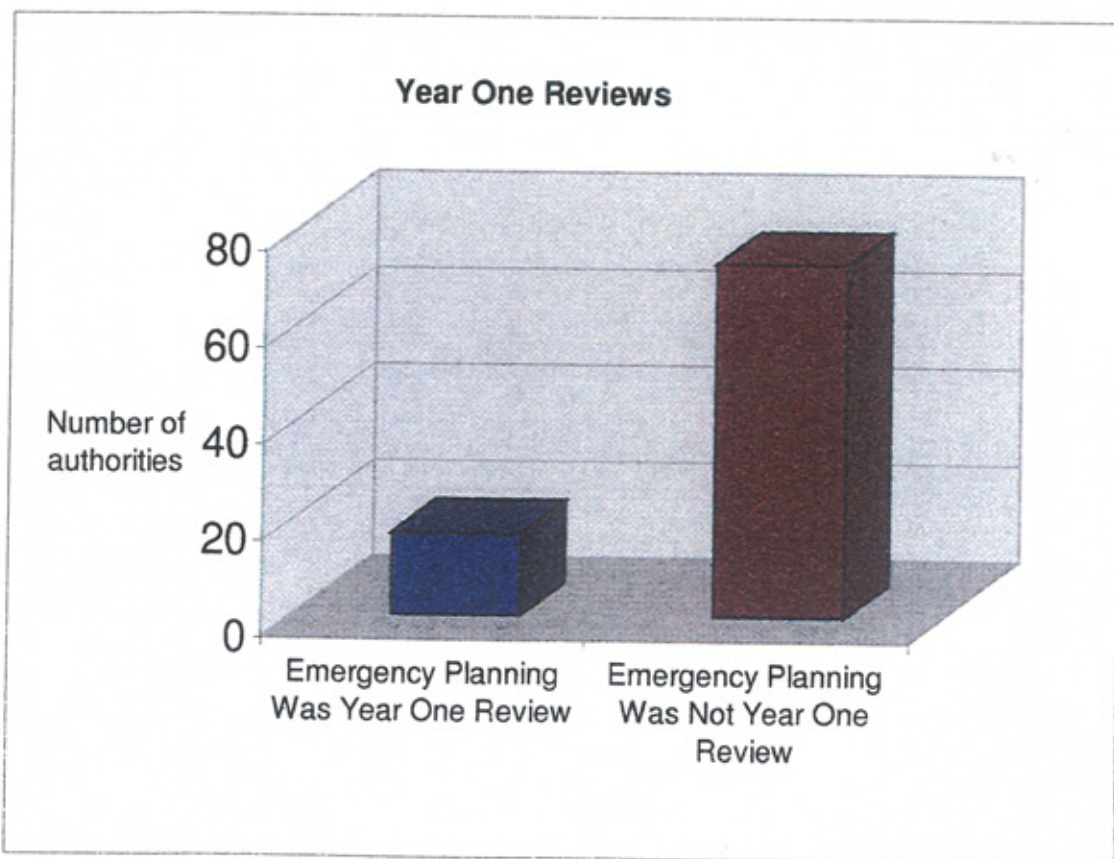


Figure 5: Year One Reviews



### Makeup Of Local Authorities Which Subjected Their Emergency Planning Service To A Best Value Review Year One

The composition of the 17 respondents who subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Year One Best Value Review (ie 2000/01) was as follows:

- 3 English Single Tier local authorities subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.
- 14 English Two Tier local authorities subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.
- 0 Welsh Unitaries subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.
- 1 Scottish Unitary subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

Figure 6 summarises the composition of local authorities subjecting their Emergency Planning Service To Year One Best Value Review.

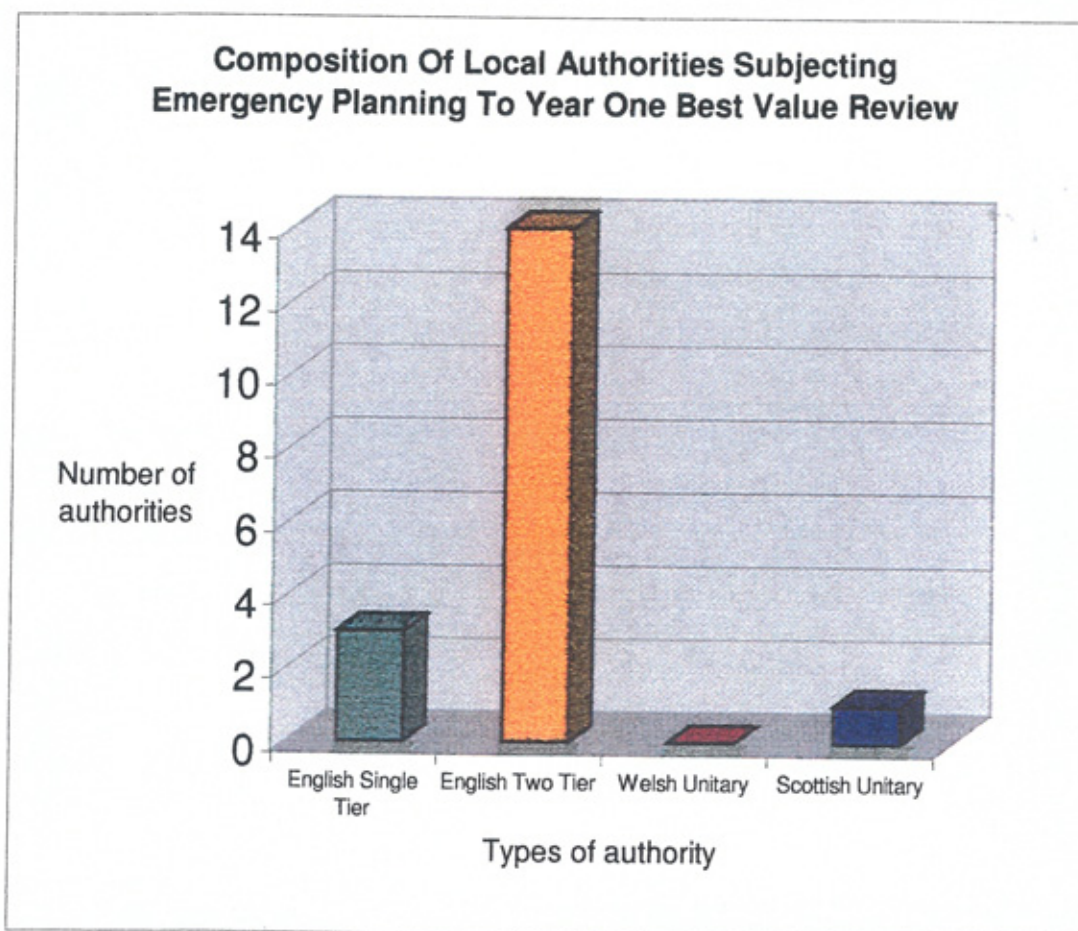


Figure 6: Composition of Local Authorities Subjecting Emergency Planning To Year One Best Value Review

### Changes In Perception Of Best Value In Emergency Planning (In % Terms):

In September 1999 respondents indicated the following:

- 78 believed that Best Value would improve Emergency Planning (ie 61%)
- 20 believed that Best Value would not improve Emergency Planning (ie 14%)
- 32 were uncertain whether Best Value would improve Emergency Planning (ie 25%)
- The overall sample size was 130 respondents.

In October 2001 those respondents which had subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Year One Review indicated the following:

- 7 believed that Best Value had improved Emergency Planning (ie 41%)
- 7 believed that Best Value had not improved Emergency Planning (ie 41%)
- 3 were uncertain whether Best Value had improved Emergency Planning (ie 18%)
- The overall sample size was 17 respondents.

Figure 7 compares in % terms the changes in perception from September 1999 responses and the October 2001 responses.

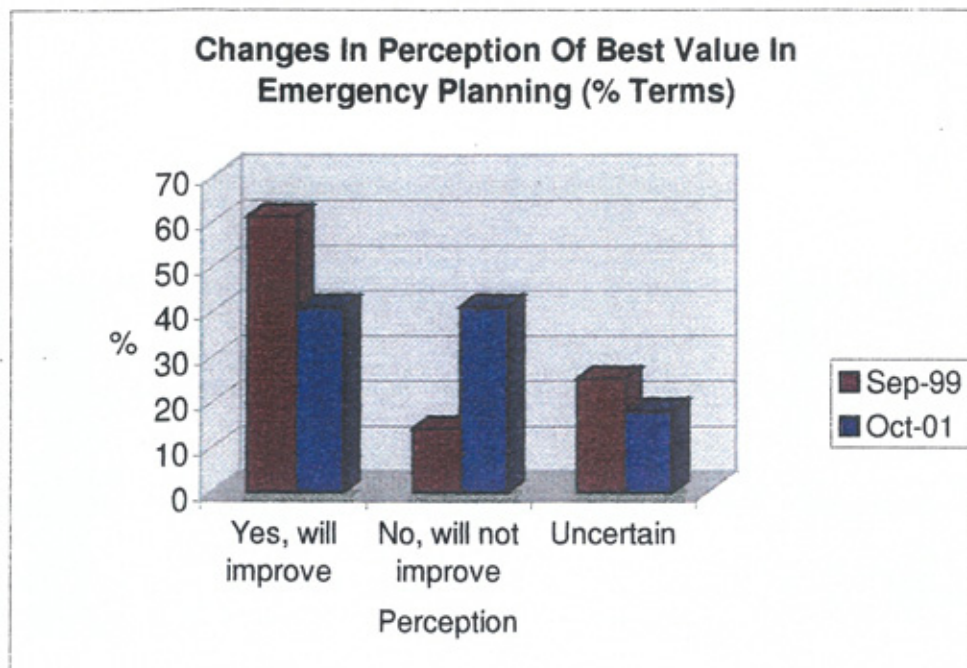


Figure 7: Changes In Perception Of Best Value In Emergency Planning

## **Changes In Perception of Best Value In Emergency Planning (By Local Authority Type)**

### **ENGLISH SINGLE TIER**

3 English Single Tier authorities subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

In September 1999 2 respondents felt that Emergency Planning could be improved by Best Value whilst 1 respondent was uncertain.

In October 2001 2 respondents felt that Emergency Planning had improved as a result of Best Value but 1 respondent felt that the service had not improved.

Table 1 highlights the changes in perceptions between September 1999 responses and October 2001 responses.

Local Authority Reference No.:	September 1999 Perception	October 2001 Perception
1	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
2	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
3	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	Yes, emergency planning was improved

Table 1: Changes In Perception of Best Value In Emergency Planning (English Single Tier)

### **ENGLISH TWO TIER**

11 English Two Tier authorities subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

In September 1999 10 respondents felt that the Emergency Planning service could be improved by Best Value, 2 respondents felt that the service could not be improved by Best Value and a further 2 respondents were uncertain.



In October 2001 5 respondents felt that Emergency Planning had improved as a result of Best Value, 5 respondents felt the service had not improved and 4 respondents remained uncertain.

Table 2 highlights the changes in perceptions between September 1999 responses and October 2001 responses.

Local Authority Reference No.:	September 1999 Perception	October 2001 Perception
1	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Uncertain if the service was improved
2	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
3	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
4	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
5	No, emergency planning cannot be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
6	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	Yes, emergency planning was improved
7	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	Uncertain if the service was improved
8	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
9	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
10	No, emergency planning cannot be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
11	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Uncertain if the service was improved
12	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
13	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
14	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Uncertain if the service was improved

Table 2: Changes In Perception Of Best Value In Emergency Planning (English Two Tier)

### WELSH UNITARY

No Welsh Unitaries subjected their Emergency Planning Service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

### SCOTTISH UNITARY

Only 1 Scottish Unitary subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

In September 1999 the respondent was uncertain whether the Emergency Planning service could be improved by Best Value, however, in October 2001 the respondent felt that the emergency planning service had not improved as a result of Best Value.

Table 3 highlights the changes in perceptions between September 1999 responses and October 2001 responses.

Local Authority Reference No.:	September 1999 Perception	October 2001 Perception
1	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	No, emergency planning was not improved

Table 3: Changes In Perception Of Best Value In Emergency Planning (Scottish Unitary)

## Changes In Perception of Best Value In Emergency Planning (By Post Holder)

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE (OR EQUIVALENT)

No Chief Executives had subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

### BEST VALUE MANAGER

2 Best Value Managers had subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

In September 1999 both Best Value Managers felt that Emergency Planning could be improved by Best Value.

In October 2001 1 Best Value Manager felt that Emergency Planning had improved as a result of Best Value whilst 1 felt that the service had not improved.

Table 4 highlights the changes in perceptions between September 1999 responses and October 2001 responses.

Best Value Manager:	September 1999 Perception	October 2001 Perception
1	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
2	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved

Table 4: Changes In Perception Of Best Value In Emergency Planning (Best Value Manager)

## EMERGENCY PLANNING PROFESSIONAL

14 Emergency Planning Professionals had subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

In September 1999 7 Emergency Planners felt that Emergency Planning could be improved by Best Value, 2 felt the service could not be improved and 5 were uncertain.

In October 2001 6 Emergency Planners felt that Emergency Planning had improved as a result of Best Value, 6 felt that the service had not improved and 2 remained uncertain.

Table 5 highlights the changes in perceptions between September 1999 responses and October 2001 responses.

Emergency Planner:	September 1999 Perception	October 2001 Perception
1	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
2	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Uncertain if the service was improved
3	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
4	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
5	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
6	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
7	Yes, emergency planning can be improved	Uncertain if the service was improved
8	No, emergency planning cannot be improved	No, emergency planning was not improved
9	No, emergency planning cannot be improved	Yes, emergency planning was improved
10	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	Yes, emergency planning was improved
11	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	Yes, emergency planning was improved
12	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	No, emergency planning was not improved
13	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	Yes, emergency planning was improved
14	Uncertain whether emergency planning can be improved by Best Value	No, emergency planning was not improved

Table 5: Changes In Perception Of Best Value In Emergency Planning (Emergency Planner)

### ELECTED MEMBER

1 Elected Member had subjected their Emergency Planning service to a Best Value Review in Year One.

In September 1999 the Elected Members was uncertain whether Best Value would improve the Emergency Planning service. In October 2001 the Elected Members remained uncertain.

### **Section 3**

## **RESEARCH COMPLETION**

Preliminary analysis of the data received has identified several people whose emergency planning service has been subjected to a Best Value Review Year One and who are willing to participate in the final phase of this research project.

The final phase of this project will be to undergo a series of one-to-one in-depth interviews in order to determine how beneficial Best Value has been in Emergency Planning and, where appropriate, determine why perceptions of Best Value have now changed. These interviews will also incorporate the piloting of “Best Value Applied To Emergency Management” model.

When this research is finalised a copy will be placed in the Emergency Planning College library at Easingwold.

## **APPENDIX N – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**



LOCATION: West Midlands (England)

TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY: English Single Tier

RESPONDENT'S POSITION: Emergency Management Officer

SEPTEMBER 1999 PERCEPTION: "Yes, Best Value will improve Emergency Management"

OCTOBER 2001 PERCEPTION: "Yes, Best Value has improved Emergency Management"

*Prior to the interview the high level questions will be posted out to the interviewee to give them a flavour of what to expect.*

1. What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Please state why you felt these were valuable. Which aspects were the least valuable?

*You stated in your original questionnaire that you believed your Emergency Planning service would improve as a result of Best Value. Having now gone through the Best Value Review process you indicated that you believe your service has improved.*

2. What specific aspects of the Emergency Planning service have been improved by Best Value? Measure/quantify/discuss.
3. Is it Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these? Can these improvements be quantified and how? Discuss.
4. Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value? How do you know these have not improved? Why have these not improved? Measure/quantify/discuss.
5. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
6. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
7. What resources were used to complete this Review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the Review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?

*Introduce the model of Best Value applied to Emergency Management and accompanying diagrams (model and diagrams will be sent out prior to interview with an accompanying*

*explanatory letter asking interviewees to critically evaluate them ie look for strengths, limitations, suggest modifications etc).*

8. Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?  
What do you feel are its strengths?  
What do you feel are its limitations?  
Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?  
To what extent would this model have helped during your Review process?
9. Has your Best Value Review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If Yes please describe the Inspectorate's key findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the Inspectorates report what you expected? If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?  
  
If No please state when you envisage the Review will be audited.
10. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to emergency planning?

LOCATION: South East (England)

TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY: English Two Tier

RESPONDENT'S POSITION: Emergency Management Officer

SEPTEMBER 1999 PERCEPTION: "Yes, Best Value will improve Emergency Management"

OCTOBER 2001 PERCEPTION: "Uncertain if Best Value has improved Emergency Management"

*Prior to the interview the high level questions will be posted out to the interviewee to give them a flavour of what to expect.*

1. What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Please state why you felt these were valuable. Which aspects were the least valuable?

*You stated in your original questionnaire that you believed your Emergency Planning service would improve as a result of Best Value. Having now gone through the Best Value Review process you indicated that you are uncertain whether the service has improved as the improvement plan has not yet come to fruition.*

2. To what extent has the improvement plan now come to fruition? To what extent has Best Value improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these? Can these improvements be quantified and how? Discuss.
3. Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value? How do you know these have not improved? Why have these not improved? Measure/quantify/discuss.
4. What resources were used to complete this Review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the Review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?
5. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
6. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.

*Introduce the model of Best Value applied to Emergency Management and accompanying diagrams (model and diagrams will be sent out prior to interview with an accompanying explanatory letter asking interviewees to critically evaluate them ie look for strengths, limitations, suggest modifications etc).*

7. Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?  
What do you feel are its strengths?  
What do you feel are its limitations?  
Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?  
To what extent would this model have helped during your Review process?
8. Has your Best Value Review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If Yes please describe the Inspectorate's key findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the Inspectorates report what you expected? If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?  
  
If No please state when you envisage the Review will be audited.
9. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to emergency planning?

LOCATION: North East (England)

TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY: English Single Tier and English Two Tier

RESPONDENT'S POSITION: Emergency Management Officer

SEPTEMBER 1999 PERCEPTION: "No, Best Value will not improve Emergency Management"

OCTOBER 2001 PERCEPTION: "Yes, Best Value has improved Emergency Management"

*Prior to the interview the high level questions will be posted out to the interviewee to give them a flavour of what to expect.*

1. What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Please state why you felt these were valuable. Which aspects were the least valuable?

*You stated in your original questionnaire that you did not believe your Emergency Planning service would not improve as a result of Best Value. Having now gone through the Best Value Review process you indicated that you now feel the service has improved.*

2. Why has your perception of Best Value changed? Discuss.
3. What specific aspects of the Emergency Planning service have been improved by Best Value?
4. Is it Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these? Can these improvements be quantified and how? Discuss.
5. Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value? How do you know these have not improved? Why have these not improved? Measure/quantify/discuss.
6. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
7. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
8. What resources were used to complete this Review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the Review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?

*Introduce the model of Best Value applied to Emergency Management and accompanying diagrams (model and diagrams will be sent out prior to interview with an accompanying*

*explanatory letter asking interviewees to critically evaluate them ie look for strengths, limitations, suggest modifications etc).*

9. Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?  
What do you feel are its strengths?  
What do you feel are its limitations?  
Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?  
To what extent would this model have helped during your Review process?
10. Has your Best Value Review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If Yes please describe the Inspectorate's key findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the Inspectorates report what you expected? If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?  
  
If No please state when you envisage the Review will be audited.
11. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to emergency planning?

LOCATION: South West (England)

TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY: English Two Tier

RESPONDENT'S POSITION: Emergency Management Officer

SEPTEMBER 1999 PERCEPTION: "No, Best Value will not improve Emergency Management"

OCTOBER 2001 PERCEPTION: "No, Best Value has not improved Emergency Management"

*Prior to the interview the high level questions will be posted out to the interviewee to give them a flavour of what to expect.*

*You stated in your original questionnaire that you did not believe your Emergency Planning service would improve as a result of Best Value. Having now gone through the Best Value Review process you indicated that you feel the service has not improved.*

1. Why do you feel that the service has not improved? Is it possible that the service could improve in the future as a result of the Best Value Review?
2. Did you find any aspect of the Best Value process valuable? Please state why you felt these were valuable. Which aspects were the least valuable?
3. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
4. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
5. What resources were used to complete this Review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the Review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?

*Introduce the model of Best Value applied to Emergency Management and accompanying diagrams (model and diagrams will be sent out prior to interview with an accompanying explanatory letter asking interviewees to critically evaluate them ie look for strengths, limitations, suggest modifications etc).*

6. Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?  
What do you feel are its strengths?

What do you feel are its limitations?

Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?

To what extent would this model have helped during your Review process?

7. Has your Best Value Review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If Yes please describe the Inspectorate's key findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the Inspectorates report what you expected? If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?

If No please state when you envisage the Review will be audited.

8. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to emergency planning?



LOCATION: North West (England)

TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY: English Single Tier and English Two Tier

RESPONDENT'S POSITION: Emergency Management Officer

SEPTEMBER 1999 PERCEPTION: "Uncertain if Best Value will improve Emergency Management"

OCTOBER 2001 PERCEPTION: "Yes, Best Value has improved Emergency Management"

*Prior to the interview the high level questions will be posted out to the interviewee to give them a flavour of what to expect.*

1. What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Please state why. Which aspects were the least valuable?

*You stated in your original questionnaire that you were uncertain whether your Emergency Planning service would improve as a result of Best Value. Having now gone through the Best Value Review process you indicated that you feel the service has improved.*

2. Why has your perception of Best Value changed? Discuss.
3. What specific aspects of the emergency planning service have been improved by Best Value?
4. Is it Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these? Can these improvements be quantified and how? Discuss.
5. Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value? How do you know these have not improved? Why have these not improved? Measure/quantify/discuss.
6. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
7. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
8. What resources were used to complete this Review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the Review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?

*Introduce the model of Best Value applied to Emergency Management and accompanying diagrams (model and diagrams will be sent out prior to interview with an accompanying*

*explanatory letter asking interviewees to critically evaluate them ie look for strengths, limitations, suggest modifications etc).*

9. Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?  
What do you feel are its strengths?  
What do you feel are its limitations?  
Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?  
To what extent would this model have helped during your Review process?
10. Has your Best Value Review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If Yes please describe the Inspectorate's key findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the Inspectorates report what you expected? If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?  
  
If No please state when you envisage the Review will be audited.
11. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to emergency planning?

LOCATION: South West (England)

TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY: English Two Tier

RESPONDENT'S POSITION: Emergency Management Officer

SEPTEMBER 1999 PERCEPTION: "No, Best Value will not improve Emergency Management"

OCTOBER 2001 PERCEPTION: "Yes, Best Value has improved Emergency Management"

*Prior to the interview the high level questions will be posted out to the interviewee to give them a flavour of what to expect.*

1. Why has your perception of Best Value changed? Discuss.
2. What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Please state why you felt these were valuable. Which aspects were the least valuable? Please state why you felt these were less valuable.
3. What specific aspects of the Emergency Planning service have been improved by Best Value? Measure/quantify/discuss.
4. Is it Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these? Can these improvements be quantified and how? Discuss.
5. Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value? How do you know these have not improved? Why have these not improved? Measure/quantify/discuss.
6. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
7. Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult to apply and why? Measure/quantify/discuss.
8. What resources were used to complete this Review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the Review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?

*Introduce the model of Best Value applied to Emergency Management and accompanying diagrams (model and diagrams will be sent out prior to interview with an accompanying explanatory letter asking interviewees to critically evaluate them ie look for strengths, limitations, suggest modifications etc).*

9. Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?  
What do you feel are its strengths?

What do you feel are its limitations?

Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?

To what extent would this model have helped during your Review process?

10. Please describe the Best Value Inspectorates key findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the Inspectorates report what you expected? Did you feel the inspection was beneficial to your service? If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?
11. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to Emergency Planning?

**APPENDIX O – LETTER SENT PRIOR TO INTERVIEWS**

12 December 2001

Dear <FirstName>

Is Best Value Achievable In Local Authority Emergency Management?

Thank you for recently agreeing to take part in a one-to-one interview with me to further the above named research. I would like to take this opportunity to confirm the date, time and venue of the meeting as being <Date> at <Time> in your offices at <Venue>. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with more detailed information about the format and purpose of the interview.

For your background information in September 1999 I issued a questionnaire to English, Scottish and Welsh local authority Chief Executives, Best Value Managers, Emergency Planning professionals and appropriate Elected Members seeking their perceptions of Emergency Planning, Best Value and finally Best Value applied to Emergency Planning. Now that Best Value is a statutory duty I am keen to reassess perceptions amongst those local authorities whose Emergency Planning service has already been subjected to a Review.

I have enclosed with this letter some of the questions I will be asking you during the interview. This will hopefully allow you time to reflect on your Review and its subsequent outcomes prior to our interview.

Also enclosed with this letter is a model I have devised as part of my research. This has been devised in the absence of any national specific guidance. It defines the local authority Emergency Management service and applies Best Value to the service. I would be very grateful if you could critically look at this model prior to our interview to identify strengths, limitations and suggest any modifications.

I envisage the interview will last approximately 1 hour 30 minutes but certainly no more than 2 hours.

Finally, I would be very grateful if you could send me copies of the key reports you produced during your Review so I can read them before the interview. These can be sent to me either in the post at the address indicated above (marked confidential) or electronically to the e-mail address indicated above.

Once again I would like to thank you for your support with this research. I look forward to meeting you in the New Year.

Yours sincerely

T Jane Ayre

Enc

<b>APPENDIX P – INTERVIEW TIMETABLE</b>
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<u>Date</u>	<u>Original Perception</u>	<u>Current Perception</u>	<u>Type of Local Authority</u>	<u>Location Of Interview</u>
14 December 2001	"No, Best Value will not improve Emergency Management"	"Yes, Best Value has improved Emergency Management"	English Single Tier and English Two Tier	North East England
17 January 2002	"Uncertain if Best Value will improve Emergency Management"	"Yes, Best Value has improved Emergency Management"	English Single Tier and English Two Tier	North West England
24 January 2002	"Yes, Best Value will improve Emergency Management"	"Uncertain if Best Value has improved Emergency Management"	English Two Tier	South East England
28 January 2002	"Yes, Best Value will improve Emergency Management"	"Yes, Best Value has improved Emergency Management"	English Single Tier	West Midlands England
31 January 2002	"No, Best Value will not improve Emergency Management"	"Best Value has not improved Emergency Management"	English Two Tier	South West England
6 February 2002	"No, Best Value will not improve Emergency Management"	"Yes, Best Value has improved Emergency Management"	English Two Tier	South West England



**APPENDIX Q – FINAL PROTOTYPE MODEL EVALUATION  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

EVALUATION OF A PROTOTYPE  
MODEL DESIGNED TO  
FACILITATE THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF AN  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
BEST VALUE REVIEW

JANE AYRE  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHUMBRIA AT NEWCASTLE

### Background:

The prototype model about to be presented to you has been developed as part of a PhD study which is considering the application of Best Value in local authority Emergency Management services.

The initial focus of this research was upon how successfully local authorities could apply Best Value to their Emergency Management services. However, research findings have indicated that many Emergency Management stakeholders within the local authorities are unsure about how to apply Best Value to their Emergency Management service and would appreciate, in the absence of any national government advice, some form of guidance. The research has also identified that local authority Emergency Management service delivery is influenced by a combination of the following five factors:

- Funding
- Legislation
- Performance measurement (i.e. local and national)
- Organisation and culture (i.e. geographical location, structure, high level support and working boundaries)
- Public perception (i.e. awareness and understanding)

With these issues in mind, a three-tier model has been developed for use by Emergency Management Best Value Review team members. The top-tier details the full remit of the service (i.e. both pre-and post-incident), the middle-tier generically applies the Four Cs of Best Value to the service and the bottom-tier of the model presents the specific questions that a review team must investigate and answer.

Preliminary evaluation of this model took place early in 2002 when it became apparent that there is no consistent approach to undertaking a Best Value Review within local authority Emergency Management services. The model has now been amended accordingly and a final evaluation is necessary in order to complete this research. I would be grateful if members of the Local Authorities Professional Issues Group would participate in this final evaluation process by considering the model enclosed in Part One of this document and then completing the questions presented in Part Two.

Please return your completed evaluation comments in the attached pre-paid envelope by Friday 7 March 2003. The individual responses to this questionnaire will remain confidential and I am happy to produce a summary of the research in the near future for the Professional Issues Group.

If you have any queries while completing the questions please do not hesitate to contact me on 07711 022895 or at [AyreTJ@aol.com](mailto:AyreTJ@aol.com).

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this research.

*Jane Ayre*

## **PART ONE: THE PROTOTYPE MODEL**

Guidance Notes For Prototype Model Use:

This model should be distributed to each Review team member at the start of an Emergency Management Best Value Review process. The aim of the Model's top-tier is to familiarize all members with the full remit of the service under Review. The subsequent middle and bottom tiers should be considered fully before finalizing how the Review will be conducted and then should be used continually throughout that Review as a reference. This model can be used by Review teams when they are preparing for internal and external audits.

The three tiers of the model are now presented overleaf. The author asks that you respect copyright until the final thesis is published.

## TOP-TIER: THE REMIT OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE:

### PREPARATION (PRE-INCIDENT)

<b><u>PLANNING</u></b> <b>Activities:</b> Project management Research Consultation Draft emergency plan procedures Identify and allocate resources Set up 24 hour notification systems Publish plan Monitor, review, amend, maintain Plan	
<b>Outcomes:</b> Generic Plans Site-specific Plans Consequence-specific Plans Business Continuity Plans 24 hour contact directory Mitigation of risk factors Increased preparedness Better co-ordination	

<b><u>LIAISON</u></b> <b>Activities:</b> Consult community representatives Consult public Chair formal planning groups Consult external stakeholder organisations Advise external stakeholder organisations Public information – media/press Releases, internet etc	
<b>Outcomes:</b> Formal multi-agency planning framework Mitigation of risk factors Increased preparedness Increased awareness Public knowledge Public awareness	

<b><u>TRAINING</u></b> <b>Activities:</b> Create training strategy Project management Consultation Produce training material Identify participants Run tests and exercises Deliver seminars Produce literature Database of skills, knowledge, training	
<b>Outcomes:</b> Awareness raising seminars Table top exercises Live exercises Plan tests Information leaflets Exercise debrief reports Mitigation of risk factors Increased preparedness	

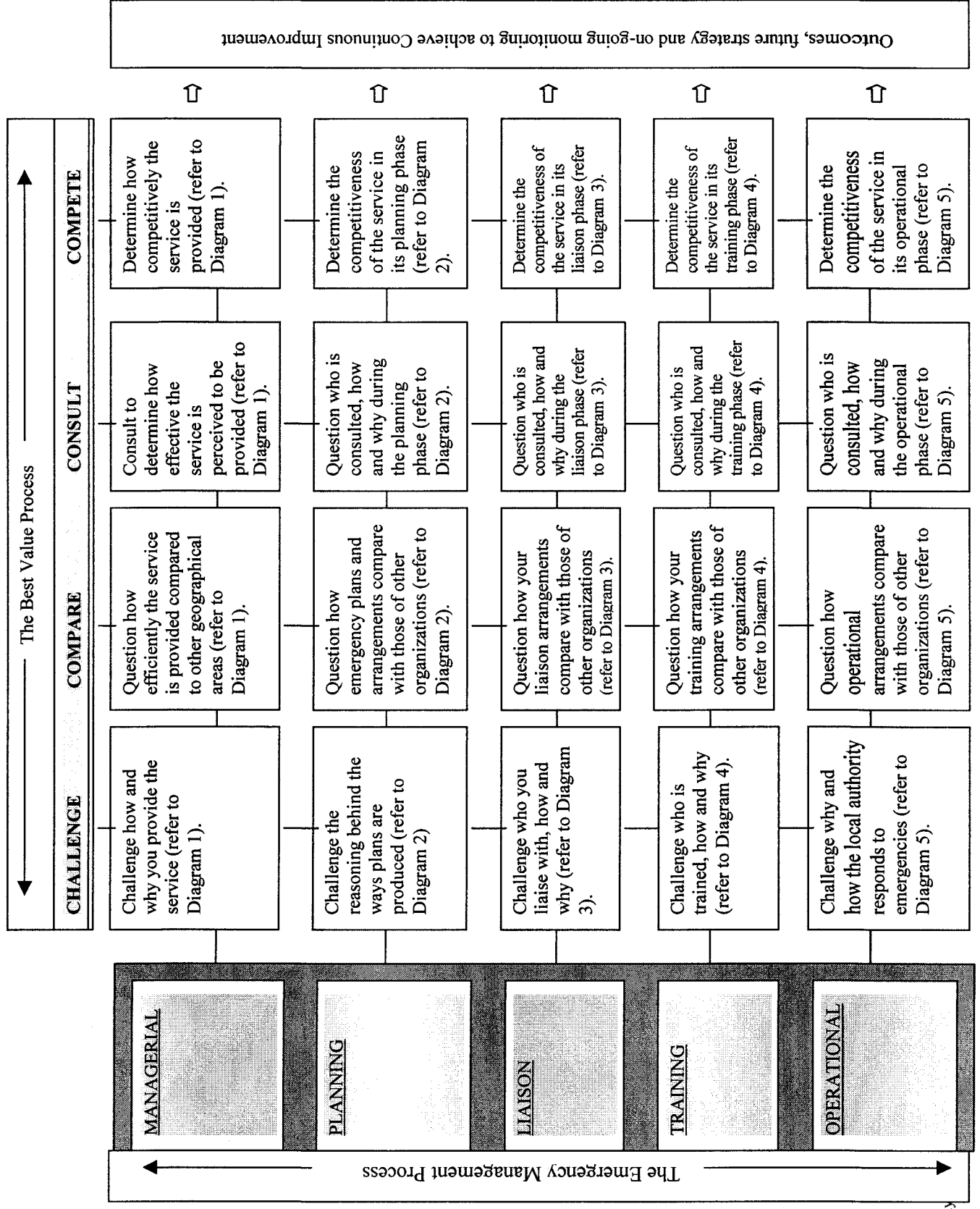
<b><u>FACTORS AFFECTING LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROCESSES</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public expectations</li> <li>Risk assessment</li> <li>Legislation</li> <li>Quality standards</li> <li>Funding (local &amp; national)</li> <li>Politics (local &amp; national)</li> <li>Chief Officers attitude</li> <li>Own past experience</li> <li>Others</li> <li>Availability of Emergency Management expertise</li> </ul>	<b><i>(IN BOTH PREPARATIONS AND OPERATIONS)</i></b>
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### OPERATIONS (POST-INCIDENT)

<b><u>IMMEDIATE RESPONSE</u></b> <b>Activities:</b> Activate Emergency Plans Set up Crisis Management Teams Support emergency services Open Emergency Centres Provide regular media briefings Monitor financial expenditure Arrange for VIP visits Co-ordinate staff recruitment Arrange provision of transport, labour, plant and materials Arrange short-term accommodation Arrange catering/cleaning service Open rest centres Adopt buildings for use as temporary mortuaries Open friends and relatives reception centres Organise welfare arrangements Organise personal support	
<b>Outcomes:</b> Mitigate effect on community Short term incident report and debriefs Show of community leadership Improved or diminished reputation of council	

<b><u>LONG-TERM RECOVERY</u></b> <b>Activities:</b> Set up & administer Appeal Fund Arrange memorial services Organise long-term accommodation Organise specialist repair works, or demolition Advise on economic recovery strategies Co-ordinate long-term multi-agency response Assist with restoration of environment Organise long-term personal support	
<b>Outcomes:</b> Mitigate effect on community Gradual return to normality Long-term incident report and debriefs	

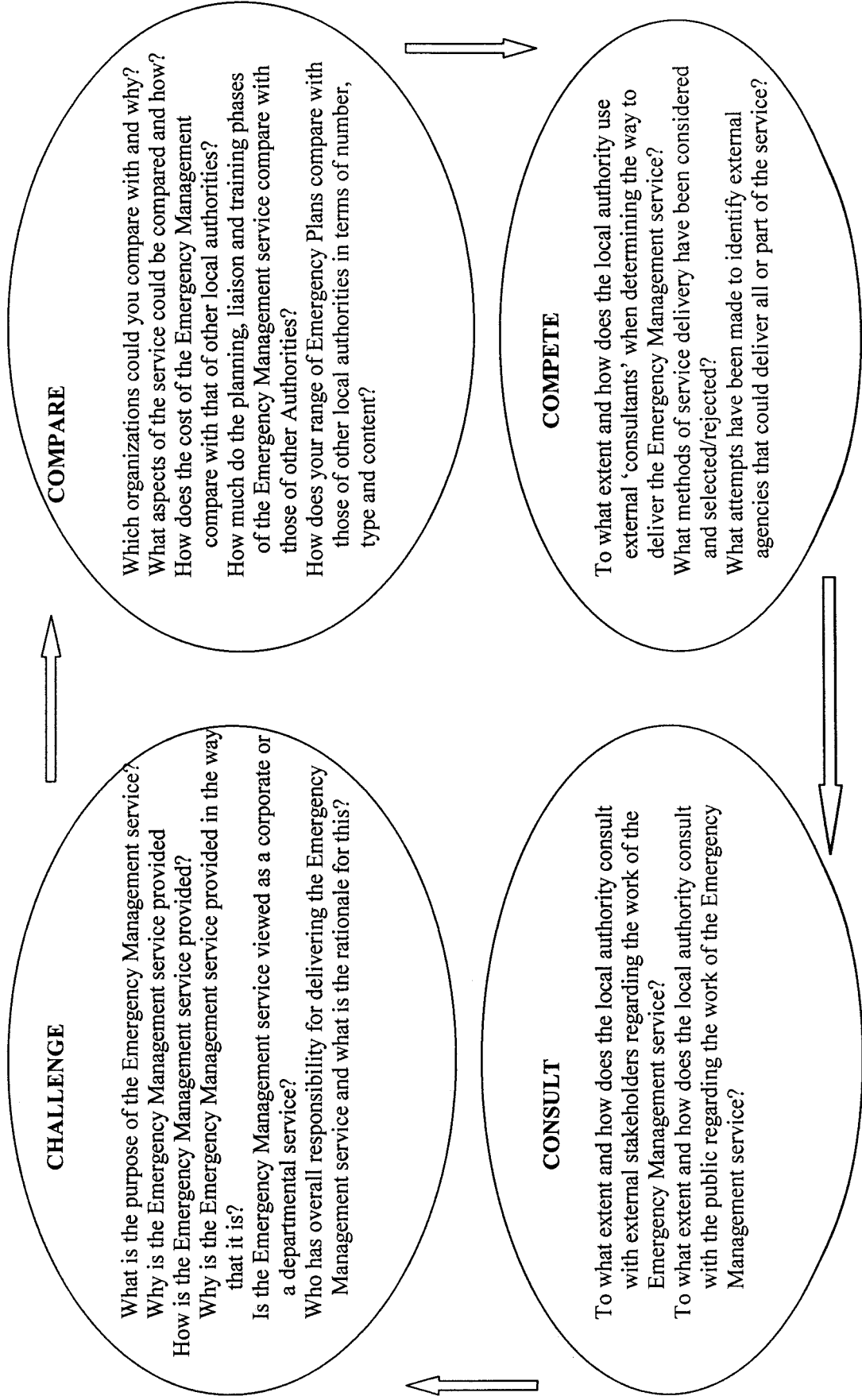
## SECOND-TIER: APPLYING BEST VALUE GENERICALLY TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE



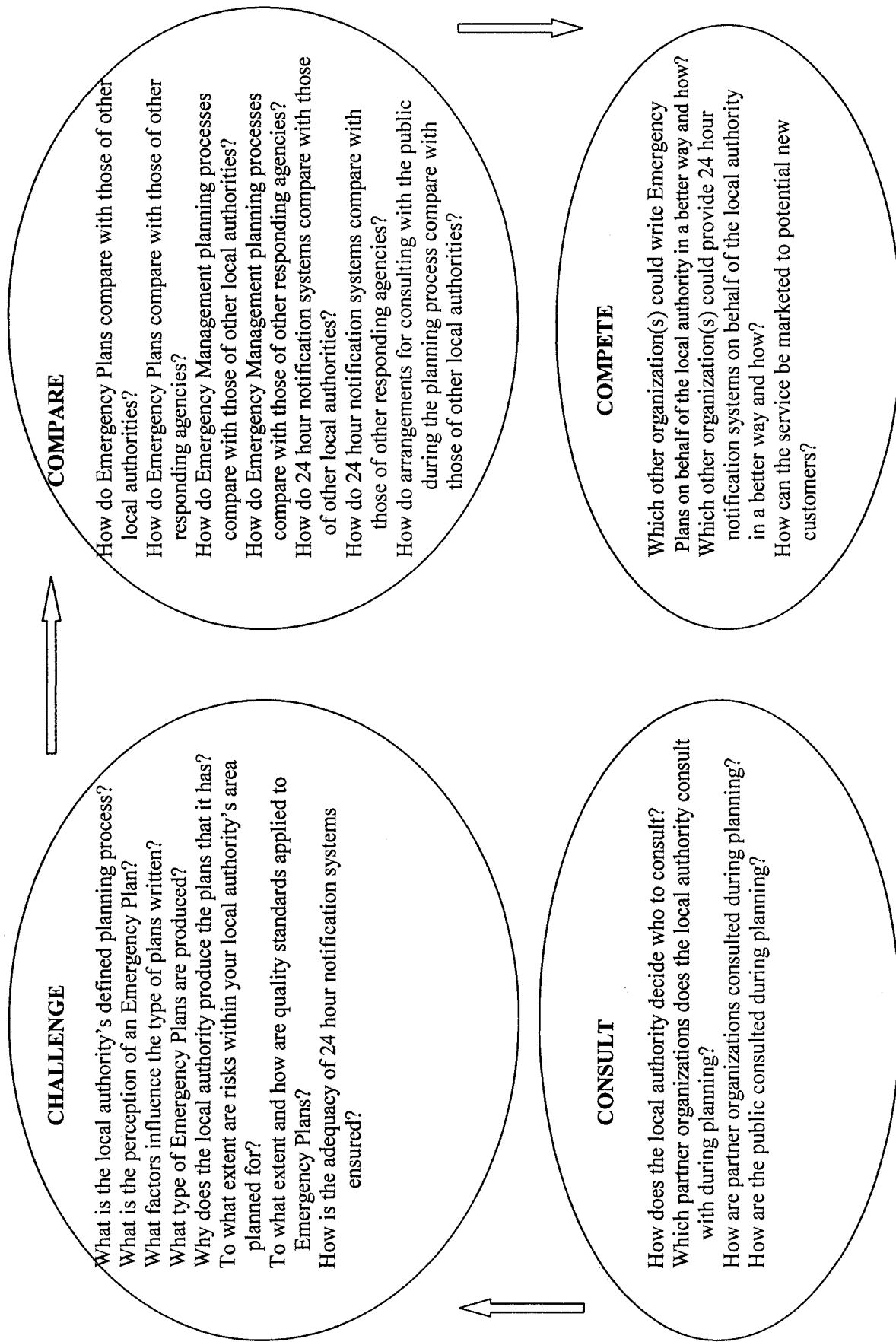


## **BOTTOM-TIER: APPLYING BEST VALUE TO THE SPECIFIC COMPONENTS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE.**

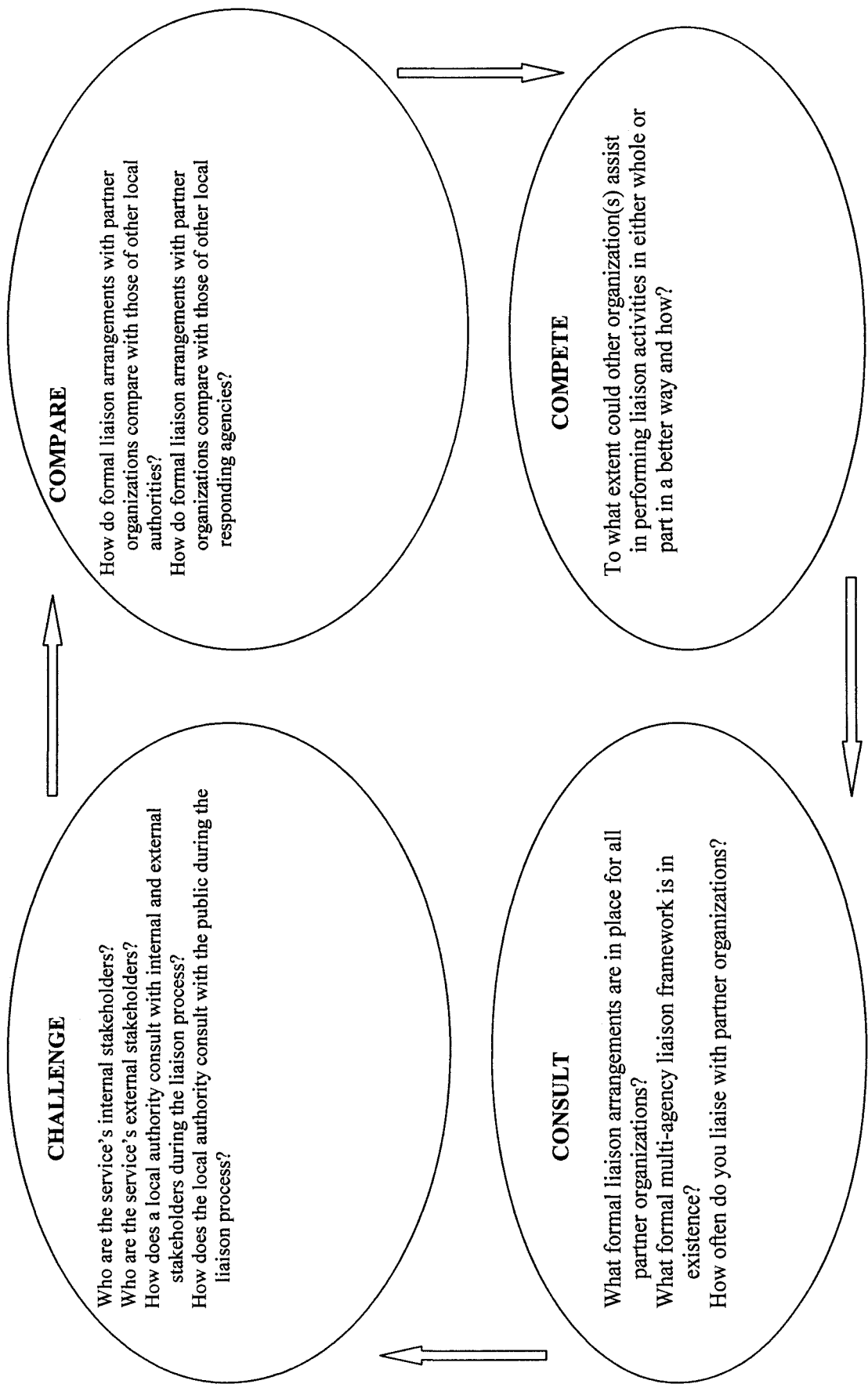
**DIAGRAM 1 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Managerial Process Of Emergency Management**



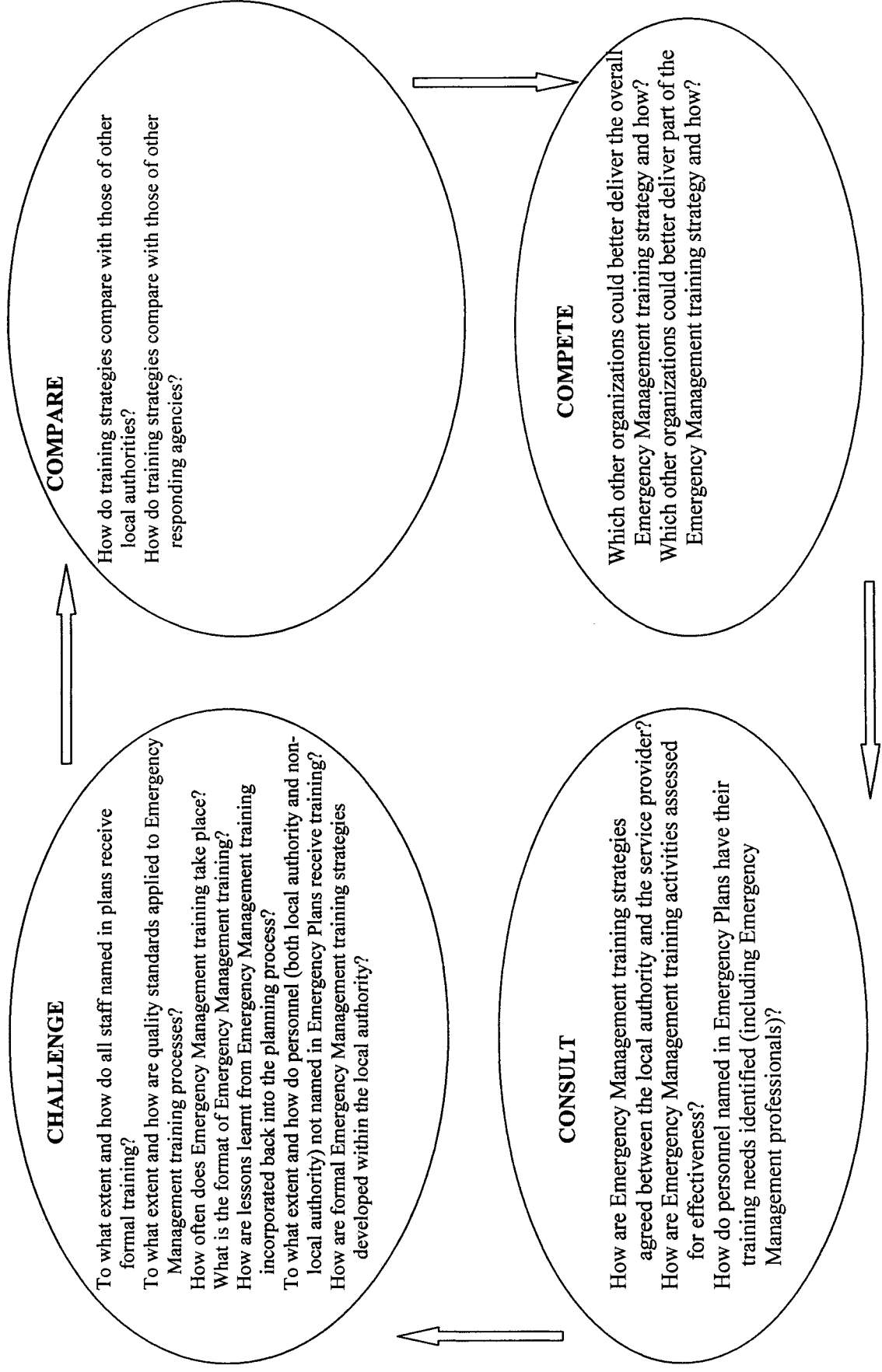
**DIAGRAM 2 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Planning Process Of Emergency Management**



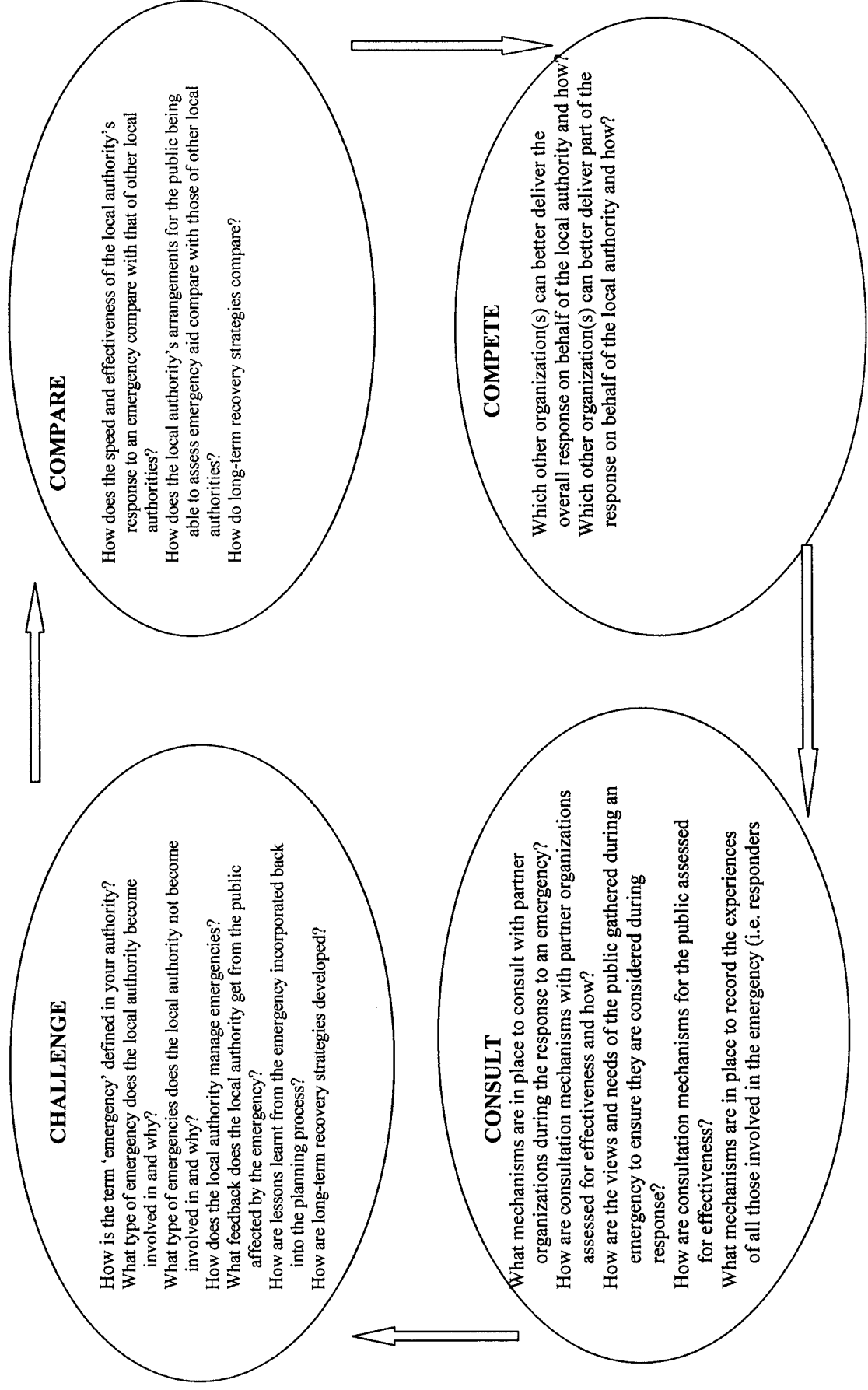
**DIAGRAM 3 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Liaison Process Of Emergency Management**



**DIAGRAM 4 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Training Process Of Emergency Management**



**DIAGRAM 5 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Operational Process Of Emergency Management**



## **PART TWO: EVALUATION OF THE PROTOTYPE MODEL**

Please ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your response.

1. I am employed by a:

Shire County ..... ☐

Shire District/Borough ..... ☐

Unitary Authority ..... ☐

London Borough ..... ☐

Metropolitan Borough ..... ☐

Fire and Civil Defence Authority ..... ☐

Combined Fire Authority ..... ☐

2. My local authority is located in:

England ..... ☐

Scotland ..... ☐

Wales ..... ☐

3. The local authority(ies) I work for:

Receives Civil Defence Grant funding ..... ☐

Does not receive Civil Defence Grant funding ..... ☐



4. My research identified that Emergency Management stakeholders perceived six factors would act as constraints to achieving an effective Emergency Management Best Value Review as:

- Lack of national quality standards for Emergency Management.
- Decreasing Civil Defence Grant.
- Lack of Emergency Management legislation.
- Lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Management Officers.
- Inconsistent working boundaries.
- Lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public.

To what extent, if at all, do you believe this prototype model can help a Review Team to overcome these constraints when implementing Best Value in their Emergency Management service?

	Yes, will help	Will help in part	No, will not help	Uncertain
Lack of national quality standards for Emergency Management.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decreasing Civil Defence Grant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Emergency Management legislation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Management Officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inconsistent working boundaries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please add comments where appropriate in support of your responses on Page 16.

Lack of national quality standards for Emergency Management:

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Decreasing Civil Defence Grant:

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Lack of Emergency Management legislation:

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Lack of understanding of Best Value by Emergency Management Officers:

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Inconsistent working boundaries:

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Lack of understanding of Emergency Management by the public:

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5. My research also found that Emergency Management stakeholders perceived five key benefits of undergoing a Best Value Review as:

- Improved quality of Emergency Management service.
- Developing partnerships.
- Providing an Emergency Management service which responds to public needs.
- Opportunity for continuous improvement.
- Raising professionalism of Emergency Management.

To what extent if at all do you believe this prototype model can assist a Review Team in achieving these benefits when implementing Best Value in their Emergency Management service?

	Yes, will help	Will help in part	No, will not help	Uncertain
Improved quality of Emergency Management service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing partnerships.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing an Emergency Management service which responds to public needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunity for continuous improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raising professionalism of Emergency Management..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please add comments where appropriate in support of your responses on Page 19.

Improved quality of Emergency Management service:

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Developing partnerships:

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Providing an Emergency Management service which responds to public needs:

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Opportunity for continuous improvement:

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Raising professionalism of Emergency Management:

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If you believe any of the “Cs” are not addressed please detail below the areas which you believe are missing.

[illegible]

7. My research has identified a series of issues that appear to influence how an Emergency Management service is currently delivered and perceptions of how it could be delivered in the future. Please indicate your initial reaction to these issues:

	I would expect this to be an influencing issue	I would not expect this to be an influencing issue	Uncertain
Civil Defence Grant status.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local authorities making an in-house financial contribution towards the service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived consistency of service delivery across the UK.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived need for emergency arrangements to dovetail across the UK.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local authority structure (i.e. single or two tier).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perception of service integration into authority's corporate aims and objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived Chief Officer support for service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	I would expect this to be an influencing issue	I would not expect this to be an influencing issue	Uncertain
Level of support for national Emergency Management Inspectorate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of support for national performance indicators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of confident in providing a service reflecting local community needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of confidence in community awareness of the service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Belief Emergency Plans would be effective if understood by the public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. To what extent do you believe it is possible for this model to be implemented as part of an Emergency Management Best Value Review in your own local authority(ies) regardless of?

	Yes, implementation is possible	Implementation possible with major revision	No, implementation is not possible	Uncertain
Civil Defence Grant status.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making an in-house financial contribution towards the service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived consistency of service delivery across the UK.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perceived need for Emergency arrangements to dovetail across the UK.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local authority structure (i.e. single or two tier).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perception of service integration into authority's corporate aims and objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes, implementation is possible	Implementation possible with major revision	No, implementation is not possible	Uncertain
Perceived Chief Officer support for service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of support for national Emergency Management Inspectorate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of support for national performance indicators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of confident in providing a service reflecting local community needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of confidence in Community awareness of the service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Belief Emergency Plans would be effective if understood by the public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

9. What do you consider to be the strengths of this model?

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10. What do you consider to be the limitations of this model and how could these be overcome?

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11. To what extent do you believe this model improves upon available documentation detailing the application of Best Value to Emergency Management?

Greatly improves ..... ☐

Improves ..... ☐

Uncertain ..... ☐

Does not improve ..... ☐

If you have any additional comments you would like to make please do so in the space provided below.

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Thank you for evaluating this model. Your comments are extremely valuable in this research.

Please return this questionnaire in the attached pre-paid envelope to:

Jane Ayre,  
Senior Emergency Planning Officer,  
County Durham and Darlington Emergency Planning Unit,  
Fire and Rescue Brigade Headquarters,  
Framwellgate Moor,  
Durham DH1 5JR

The E.P.S.'s Local Authority Professional Issues Group will be kept informed of this model's development.

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OFFICE USE:

Date returned: \_\_\_\_\_

Date processed: \_\_\_\_\_



## **APPENDIX R – NOTES OF FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS**

Notes Of Follow-Up Interview With Interviewee One Held On 14 December 2001 (notes agreed with Interviewee One via e-mail on 15 December 2001)

No.	Question	Response:
1	What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Please state why you felt these were valuable. Which aspects were the least valuable?	<p>Most valuable aspects were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The opportunity to actively discuss and challenge with key stakeholders why we perform the service and why we perform it in the way we do.</li> <li>- The opportunity to raise the profile of the service (by discussing it with key stakeholders – ‘putting it on the chief officer management team agenda’)</li> </ul> <p>Least valuable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It should have been reviewed as a cross-cutting service with all 9 local authorities working on it together (was done as part of the Fire Brigade as a stand alone service. ‘It feels like we have only done half a review’)</li> <li>- Because the review was done as part of the Brigade (i.e. removed from local authorities) it gave the false impression that in the event of an emergency the Emergency Planning Unit would respond and deal with the incident. This is misleading.</li> <li>- Had to follow the Fire Brigade’s in-house Best Value process whereby the rules kept changing as the Review went along – this led to time delays and in some instances duplication of effort.</li> </ul>
2	Your original perception was the service would not improve as a result of Best Value. Your current perception is that the service has improved as a result of Best Value. Why has your perception of Best Value changed?	<p>Original perception that Best Value would not improve the service was based upon the following assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As there are no national standards and performance indicators for Emergency Planning didn’t feel that there would be any ‘valuable and meaningful’ comparative data upon which to base the ‘compare’ element of the Review. Without being able to compare it would be impossible to prove how competitive the service is.</li> <li>- Background reading about Best Value prior to undertaking the Review highlighted many ‘grey areas of uncertainty’ therefore I was unsure what Best Value actually was and was not other than a cost-cutting exercise.</li> </ul>

		<p>Since undertaking the Review perception has changed for lots of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- By setting up a benchmarking group with similar Emergency Planning Units was able to obtain some valid and meaningful comparative information.</li> <li>- The service has improved because the Review has highlighted shortcomings and reasons for those shortcomings. An Action Plan has been put in place to rectify those shortcomings. The improvements overall will cost the local authorities additional money but will improve the robustness of their emergency preparedness.</li> </ul>
3.	What specific aspects of the Emergency Planning service have been improved by Best Value?	<p>Several aspects have improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater appreciation among partner organizations as to what the Emergency Planning Unit does (and in some cases does not do). Local authority partners are showing more willing to participate in Emergency Planning and 'perform their end of the bargain'.</li> <li>- Better recording systems (with meaning behind them)</li> <li>- The Chief Emergency Planning Officer has decided to manage the Unit in a different way i.e. he will concentrate on managing the Unit and not plan writing. This will ensure that the Unit keeps up to date with current issues (both local and national).</li> </ul> <p>A combination of factors have improved the Service.</p> <p>Best Value has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highlighted areas of shortcomings in the way the service is currently delivered.</li> <li>- Ensured that the service is on the chief officers agenda and as a result of this we have better/improved local authority chief officer relations.</li> <li>- Raised the profile of the Emergency Planning Unit within the Fire Brigade. The Brigade used the Unit's Review as a model upon which to base others.</li> <li>- Highlighted what our partner organizations (including local authority partners) think about the service and the way it is delivered and managed.</li> </ul> <p>Other factors which have helped to improve the service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The wide range of high profile emergencies which have occurred both locally and</li> </ul>
4.	Is it Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these? Can these improvements be quantified and how?	

		<p>nationally over the last 18 months (e.g. extensive prolonged flooding, fuel shortages, foot and mouth disease, terrorist incidents).</p> <p>These improvements are 'quantified' as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Fire Brigade now seek the views of the Unit on a regular basis and have asked for a representative to sit on the Brigade Policy Setting Team as well as an Emergency Planning Officer to be present in Brigade Control during an emergency incident.</li> <li>- Partner organizations now seek the advice and views of the Unit on many issues.</li> <li>- Local authority partners now seek the advice, views and practical help of the Unit on many issues i.e. foot and mouth was not an Emergency Planning issue but the Unit was asked to sort out local authority problems on their behalf.</li> <li>- As a result of the profile raising aspect of the Best Value Review, and its subsequent findings, approaches have been made from a number of organizations asking the Unit to write plans for incidents at petrol stations, plans for water treatment works, a generic and several site specific flood plans as well as give advice on business continuity planning to the Passport Agency.</li> </ul>
5.	<p>Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value? How do you know these have not improved? Why have these not improved?</p>	<p>The following aspects of the service have not improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certain staffing problems/issues i.e. some staff have reached their maximum potential and no amount of additional training/mentoring will enable them to develop any further. This is a major concern as the remit of Emergency Planning is changing year on year.</li> <li>- The local authority's role in an emergency remains unknown by most of the general public.</li> </ul> <p>It is known that these aspects have not improved because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Findings from regular staff appraisals</li> <li>- Staff attitudes</li> <li>- Differences/variations in staff workloads</li> <li>- During times of emergency the general public continue to contact the emergency services for advice and assistance (for example during flooding the public telephone the Fire Brigade and not the local authority).</li> </ul> <p>These aspects have not improved because:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Whilst Best Value allows the opportunity to identify this as a weakness there are limitations (employment legislation) which make it impossible to tackle the issue under the remit of Best Value.</li> <li>- A large financial resource would be required to undertake this task. Ideally this task would need to be done on a national, joined-up basis to have any real impact (e.g. like the recent Environment Agency Floodline TV adverts).</li> </ul>
6.	Which aspect of the Best Value process (i.e. which of the 4 Cs) did you find most easy to apply and why	<p>The easiest aspect to apply was 'challenge'. It was very easy to continually keep asking the question 'why' i.e. why do we provide the service, why do we provide the service in the way we do etc.</p> <p>The hardest aspect to apply was 'compete'.</p> <p>Don't feel that this aspect of the Review was actually completed for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A whole hearted attempt was not made to find competitors because of self-interest e.g. how would we be able to show that we can compete against them, what happens if they are proved to be more competitive in terms of quality and cost? Etc.</li> <li>- A whole hearted attempt was not made to find competitors because of political reasons i.e. the elected officials in the council do not want outside bodies providing this service</li> </ul> <p>(Note: It was the interviewees opinion that it is possible for an outside body to provide the service).</p>
7.	Which aspect of the Best Value process (i.e. which of the 4 Cs) did you find most difficult and why?	
8.	What resources were used to complete this Review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the Review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?	<p>The following resources were used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staffing (a Senior Emergency Planning Officer took the lead in the process by dedicating 70% of her time to the 9 months it took to complete the review; the Chief Emergency Planning Officer dedicated 50% of his time to the period of the Review; a Fire Brigade Administrative Officer attended Review team meetings to take minutes; a Shire County Council officer, a Unitary authority officer, a Shire District Council officer and an officer from a neighbouring local authority attended meetings and made comments on reports/papers produced; elected members from the Combined Fire Authority and the Brigade's Principal Officers Group determined which options were selected).</li> <li>- Stationery, printing and subsistence (i.e. staff traveling costs to attend</li> </ul>

	<p>benchmarking meetings) came out of the Unit's existing budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public consultation exercises were funded out of the Unit's existing budget.</li> </ul> <p>Whilst it was felt that the level of resource was appropriate for this Review, in terms of staffing it was very high (i.e. 1.5 officers from a team of 7 = 21%). It was also felt that even if more resources had been directed at the Review the outcomes would have remained the same.</p> <p>All resources used during the Review were taken from the Unit's existing budget i.e. resources were taken out of the normal service delivery to ensure that this Review was undertaken.</p> <p>(Note: The interviewee stated that had the Review been undertaken during the present 2001/02 financial year it would not have been possible to dedicate such a high level of resource due to the unprecedented number of on-going emergencies within the area since November 2000).</p>
9.	<p>Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model? What do you feel are its strengths? What do you feel are its limitations? Can you suggest any modifications to improve it? To what extent would this model have helped during your Review process?</p> <p>Based upon experiences gleaned during recent Review I agree with the model presented.</p> <p>The following strengths were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The model applies Best Value to the whole of the Emergency Planning service not just the planning aspect.</li> <li>- The model and diagrams clearly identify the big issues which must be addressed.</li> <li>- It provides a good, visual, starting point to focus the mind.</li> </ul> <p>The only limitation that was identified related to Diagram 5. It was felt that the issue of long-term recovery was not clearly identified.</p> <p>The following modification was suggested to Diagram 5:</p> <p>'Challenge' – insert 'is there a recognized need for long-term recovery strategies?'</p> <p>'Compare' – insert 'how does your long-term recovery strategy compare?'</p> <p>It was felt that this model and accompanying diagrams would definitely have helped during the Review process as it identifies clearly the big issues which need to be addressed. Especially in the early days when valuable time can be lost trying to phathom out what exactly is required. It was felt it would be of particular benefit for elected members and those members of staff not directly involved in a Review process.</p>

10.	<p>Has your Best Value Review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If yes please describe the Inspectorate's key findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the Inspectorates report what you expected? If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?</p> <p>If no please state when you envisage the Review will be audited.</p>	<p>The Review has not yet been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate.</p> <p>The indication at present is that the service will not be audited i.e. the interviewee has contacted the Best Value Inspectorate on several occasions but calls have not been returned.</p>
11.	<p>Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to Emergency Planning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The validity of comparative information supplied is questionable in some instances (if using information need to ensure that everyone is working from the same basis)</li> <li>- Whilst records were always kept they are now kept in a better way i.e. it is no longer a number recording process there is a meaning behind it. For example in relation to the Duty Officer Scheme a record was kept of the number of times the pager was activated (a purely number based exercise), now the number of times as well as the reasons for activation are recorded so that trends can be identified and any gaps in emergency preparedness can be identified.</li> </ul>

Notes Of Follow-Up Interview With Interviewee Two Held On 17 January 2002 (notes agreed with Interviewee Two via e-mail on 22 January 2002)

Question No.	Question	Response
1	What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Which aspects were the least valuable?	<p>Most valuable: The comparison element of the review ie the benchmarking. The service was previously provided in isolation – we had no real idea how it compared with those services provided by other local authorities. The benchmarking provided an opportunity to share historical and current data including good practice. It also allowed joint working on initiatives which would be useful for the future ie devising performance indicators which could be used for future benchmarking exercises in the absence of national ones.</p> <p>Least valuable: Consultation with the public. It was a very difficult area to tackle – had no experience in this area and don't provide the service directly to the public. The responses that were received from consulting with the public did not provide any quality information and most answers (because the public do not know about the service) were mid-ground answers eg 'uncertain', 'appropriate' etc. However, even these results showed that the profile of the service needed to be raised.</p> <p>Consultation with other stakeholders was much more useful.</p>
2.	You stated in your original questionnaire that you were uncertain whether your Emergency Planning service would improve as a result of Best Value. Having now gone through the Best Value Review process you indicated that you feel the service has improved.	<p>When the original questionnaire was answered I was unsure of Best Value – what it entailed, how the process would be undertaken etc.</p> <p>Having now gone through the Review process I can see definite measurable savings within the service whilst at the same time providing the service in a more efficient way. The main thrust of the action plan was to utilise information technology as much as possible (this tied in with achieving central government's e-government policy). Rather than emergency plans being paper based they are now to be stored on palm top computer which Emergency Planning</p>



	Why has your perception of Best Value changed?	Officers carry with them at all times so that response can be immediate. Utilising information technology in this way will make plan amendment much easier and cost-effective. (Note: it was pointed out that this utilisation of information technology is on hold pending the announcement of the level of Civil Defence Grant allocation for the next financial year).
3.	What specific aspects of the Emergency Planning service have been improved by Best Value?	<p>Plan production procedure (whilst original work will remain paper based final copies will be held electronically – saves printing costs, time, paper and storage).</p> <p>Plan amendment procedure (whilst original work will remain paper based final copies will be held electronically – saves printing costs, time, paper and storage).</p> <p>Produced publicity leaflets to raise the profile of the service. Leaflets are tailored for the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- elected members (incorporated into elected members information packs)</li> <li>- emergency services (located in Control Rooms)</li> <li>- the public (distributed at fayres, public events etc)</li> </ul> <p>Through benchmarking club have devised 5 Emergency Planning performance indicators which will be introduced in 2002/03 financial year. To run alongside this a quality assurance plan has been produced ie best value is not just about number gathering its about quality as well (better to train 50 people effectively than 100 badly).</p>
4.	Is it Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these?	<p>It shouldn't have really needed Best Value to improve the service but Best Value made us accept, and do something about, the need for performance monitoring.</p> <p>Central government's e-government policies were also a factor but a substantial amount of credit for improving the service must be directed at undergoing a Best Value Review.</p>
5.	Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value? How do you know these have not improved? Why	Best Value did not allow personnel related issues to be addressed. Due to the nature of the profession (ie few career opportunities) personnel tend to stay within the service for long periods of time or even until retirement – both of which have obvious impacts upon motivation, acceptance of new ideas and practices etc.

	have these not improved?	Best Value did not actually identify any ways in which emergency plans themselves could be improved. When benchmarking was undertaken there was a focus on statistical comparisons rather than upon identifying good practice.
6.	Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and why?	Challenge was the most easy to apply. The reason being that it was incorporated specifically as the final phase in the review ie it was used as a means of analysing the data gathered from the other 3 C's and drawing conclusions. The challenge element was used to justify why the conclusions were reached. It was felt that the challenge could only be undertaken when considering the full facts about the service.
7.	Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult to apply and why?	Consultation was not the most difficult but it was the most time consuming, most labour intensive and the least productive ie it did not produce valuable information.
8.	What resources were used to complete this review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?	<p>It took 8 months to complete the review at an approximate cost of £12,000 (made up of £4,000 consultancy fees and advertising plus £8,000 estimate of emergency planning staff time). The consultancy fees and advertising costs were paid from the corporate budget while the remainder was paid from the Emergency Planning budget.</p> <p>Yes, the level of resource as appropriate for the review. The review was very demanding.</p> <p>The resources did to a certain extent dictate the flow of the review. However, it was felt that there was no alternative to undertaking the review. As the Emergency Planning service is very small and specialised it was felt that an internal person needed to lead the review. Had an outside person led the review they would have needed much greater access to Emergency Planning staff time in order to gain a full appreciation of the service.</p> <p>One Principal Emergency Planning Officer spent 25% of his time working on the Review. However, his existing workload was not reduced.</p>
9.	Introduce the model of local authority Emergency Management.	Agree in principle with the model of local authority Emergency Management. Only concern – it looks like the 'outcomes' read directly across from the 'activities'.

	<p>Introduce model/diagrams for Best Value applied to local authority Emergency Management and accompanying diagrams.</p> <p>Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?</p> <p>What do you feel are its strengths?</p> <p>What do you feel are its limitations?</p> <p>Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?</p> <p>To what extent would this model have helped during your review process?</p>	<p>The model differs from the approach that was used by the Shire County Council because they tackled challenge as the last element but still asked the same questions as identified in the model (maybe consider putting in statement that there is no set order to the 4 C's? – cannot be over prescriptive as each local authority will have its own Best Value process but all will have to tackle the same 4 C's).</p> <p>There needs to be a clearer explanation as to how the diagrams accompany the main model.</p> <p>This model and accompanying diagrams would definitely have helped the Emergency Planning Best Value review. The information is available in lots of different sources but not specifically for emergency planning and not tackling the issues unique to emergency planning. This model and diagrams fill an information gap.</p>
10.	<p>Has your Best Value review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If no please state when you envisage the review will be audited. If you had to undertake the review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?</p>	<p>The review was supposed to have been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate in August 2001. At the last minute this did not happen – no explanation was provided and it remains unclear whether this inspection has been cancelled or postponed. Calls and queries are not being returned or answered by the Inspectorate. This has had a demotivating effect. There was a lot of hard work undertaken and a considerable amount of pressure placed upon staff during the review all for no response/recognition by the Inspectorate. Uncertain if and when review will be audited.</p> <p>The review has been inspected by the County Council's internal auditor. All recommendations were accepted. Staffing levels were questioned as they are high in comparison to other Emergency Planning Units. These levels were justifiable due to high level of income generation. There is now on-going internal monitoring of the implementation of the Review's Action Plan. The Emergency Planning Unit reports on a 6 monthly basis to their liaison Cabinet Member and Chief Executive and in turn the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>If had to undertake review again would not bring in an outside consultant to undertake the</p>

		consultation aspect of the Review. Would, however, still use the structured debrief format for the consultation element of the Review but with the in-house staff developing the questions and possibly delivering the sessions in person or getting an independent officer to deliver them. This would achieve a cost saving but no detract anything from the quality of the process.
11.	Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to emergency planning?	<p>Have a number of concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there are mixed messages coming from the Best Value Inspectorate and local authorities in different geographical locations eg Emergency Planning services should be reviewed as cross-cutting issue, Emergency Planning services should be reviewed as stand alone, Emergency Planning services should have light touch inspections, Emergency Planning services should have in-depth inspections etc</li> <li>- there should be a joined up approach between local authorities regarding Emergency Planning ie Shire County Council reviewed its Emergency Planning service in Year 1 but the unitary authority will not review it until Year 5 despite using the same service provider.</li> <li>- Dealing with actual emergencies does lead to slippage in achieving action plan targets</li> </ul> <p>Most important thing is that we are trying to continually undertake Best Value and incorporate its rationale into our work. Don't see it as ever being finalised.</p> <p>We are continuing our investigations in the competition element of Best Value. As part of review several competitors were identified – none of which could provide all of the Emergency Planning service. Are now identifying which elements of the service they could provide and at what cost. This intum will lead to more accurate costing of our own provision nut just a COMAH hourly rate.</p> <p>Negotiations are underway regarding the introduction of time recording for Emergency Planning Officers. Thought is being given to the outcomes required in order that a system can be introduced which provides quality information about how staff time is spent.</p>

Notes Of Follow-Up Interview With Interviewee Three Held On 24 January 2002 (notes agreed with Interviewee Three via e-mail on 28 January 2002)

Question No.	Question	Response
1	What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Which aspects were the least valuable?	<p>Most valuable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. It provided the opportunity to reflect on what was being done ie an in-depth analysis of what Emergency Planning is about. The process identified that Emergency Planning was not led from the top but it was led by the Chief Emergency Planning Officer (it has only been in the last 2 years that the County Council has appointed a Chief Executive with an interest in Emergency Planning).</li> <li>ii. It was a good vehicle for raising awareness of Emergency Planning both within the local authority and with external organisations.</li> </ul> <p>Least valuable:</p> <p>The entire process was very time consuming and with the benefit of hindsight the review could have been done better, however, at the time there was no experience of Best Value to tap into.</p>
2.	You stated in your original questionnaire that you believed your Emergency Planning service would improve as a result of Best Value. Having now gone through the Best Value Review process you indicated that you were uncertain whether the service has improved as the improvement plan has not yet come to fruition. To what extent has the improvement plan now come to fruition?	<p>From the improvement plan several actions have already taken place as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the authority is in the process of linking Emergency Planning with business activities, risk management and health and safety by creating a centralised Risk Management Group based in the main County Hall building.</li> <li>- the number of Council staff trained to respond to an emergency is being increased</li> <li>- performance measures have been adopted to demonstrate improvement in the service</li> <li>- standardised training procedures have now been agreed across the County. This means all District Council and County Council staff will be trained in the same way which will ultimately improve mutual aid.</li> <li>- Standardised format for the Emergency Procedures Manual has been agreed</li> </ul>

	<p>To what extent has Best Value improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these?</p>	<p>across the County. This means all the District Councils and County Council will use the same format (Note: procedures were previously compatible but now they are standardised).</p> <p>The emphasis is still to continue to implement the improvement plan eg the Home Office Standards will be adopted once revised Standards have been produced.</p> <p>Overall as a result of the Best Value process the authority has a much better idea of what they are doing, how and why in relation to Emergency Planning.</p> <p>The improvements to the service have been due to the combined effects of the Best Value Review and Exercise Senator (a Ministry of Defence large-scale exercise which took 14 months to plan and took place at the same time as the Best Value Review) eg extra local authority staff were trained – this was a Best Value requirement but also a requirement for Exercise Senator.</p>
3.	<p>Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value? How do you know these have not improved? Why have these not improved?</p>	<p>Despite the Review the Emergency Planning service is still under-resourced (several years ago the Emergency Planning Unit comprised of 9 officers now there is a 1 x Chief Emergency Planning Officer, 2 x Emergency Planning Officers, 1 x Assistant Emergency Planning Officer to be appointed and 1 admin officer) and it is felt that service's workload is continually increasing. Under the new Risk Management Group structure there will only be 3 Risk Managers with Emergency Planning specialism (Note: these positions would be re-graded from current SO1/2 salary to spinal points 41-46 – £27,717-£31,254). One of the main arguments for the Risk Management Group structure was to benefit from synergy and economies of scale.</p> <p>The Risk Management Group will be based in the main County Hall building (Note: the Emergency Planning Unit is currently located over a mile away from the County Hall building). This move, for the Emergency Planning service, has pros and cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pros – the move into the 'mainstream' would raise the profile of the service among other local authority staff, the service would be fully integrated into the council's communication loop and would have direct access to chief officers</li> <li>- cons – the accommodation would not be of the same high standard from which</li> </ul>

		<p>the service is currently delivered. The new accommodation would be open plan – possibly not suitable for the sensitive nature of some Emergency Planning information.</p>
4.	<p>What resources were used to complete this review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the review?</p> <p>To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?</p>	<p>The review took longer to complete than originally envisaged. A considerable amount of officer time was taken up during this review. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer and Emergency Planning Officers were advisors throughout the review process and the cost of their time came from within the existing Emergency Planning budget.</p> <p>With the benefit of hindsight because the review tackled Emergency Planning as a single service it could be described as ‘using a sledge hammer to crack a nut’ especially when considering the cost of undertaking this review in comparison to the size of the service in relation to the rest of the authority. However, it was useful to get opinions from all parties.</p> <p>Luckily the Emergency Planning Unit did not have to tackle any major incidents during the time of the review process. Day to day service delivery did not suffer as a result of the review because it was possible to juggle deadlines according to priorities.</p> <p>Taking questions 5 and 6 together it was felt that whilst no ‘C’ was particularly difficult none was particularly easy either. Best Value was a new process that had to be thought through as it was tackled, it was ultimately a learning experience. The following comments were made:</p> <p>Challenge - There was a preconceived idea that the challenge aspect of the process would be difficult.</p> <p>Consultation - Took place with other councils in the county, emergency services, staff of the County Council, elected members, voluntary organisations, health services, Home Office and other councils across the country. It involved surveys, interviews and witness statements. This process was time consuming and produced varied results. The District Council and emergency services information was very valuable. Overall this aspect of the review did raise the profile of the service. (Note: consultation took place with</p>
5.	<p>Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C’s) did you find most easy to apply and why?</p>	

		<p>elected members rather than with the public).</p> <p>Comparison – the Emergency Planning Unit joined a benchmarking club with other similar units. Whilst this provided useful information concern was expressed at comparing like with like eg cost of providing the service per head of population sounds is a good measure but each authority was calculating the figure in a different way hence the sharing of information could be misleading. In addition to the Unit joining a benchmarking club, a process benchmarking exercise was undertaken with 2 other local authorities (Note: rationale – one was also undergoing a Year 1 Review, the other was to undergo a Year 2/3 Review but wanted to undertake preparatory work). The process benchmarking entailed the service being broken into 4 areas – planning, liaison, training &amp; exercising, operational response. Each area was further sub-divided into smaller parts. The outcome was that in the main all 3 authorities were doing things similarly but there were slight differences. Each authority was able to learn lessons and make minor enhancements to improve service delivery.</p> <p>Competition – an advertisement was placed in the local press seeking companies who would be interested in performing the Emergency Planning service. Responses were received. No company was able to offer the entire service – none were prepared to tackle the operational response side of the service and none had any track record. Whilst the decision was made to keep the service in-house it was also agreed to keep reviewing the situation regarding possible competitors.</p> <p>See response to question 5.</p>
6.	<p>Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult to apply and why?</p>	
7.	<p>Introduce the model of local authority emergency management.</p> <p>Introduce model/diagrams for Best Value applied to local authority Emergency Management and accompanying diagrams.</p>	<p>Agree with the model. The elements identified mirror those used during my authority's process benchmarking exercise. Many of the activities identified in the model are already been undertaken by this authority, for those which aren't (eg business continuity) plans are afoot to fill this gap.</p> <p>It was felt that this model asked the necessary questions and would provide a useful</p>



	<p>Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model? What do you feel are its strengths? What do you feel are its limitations?</p> <p>Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?</p> <p>To what extent would this model have helped during your review process?</p>	<p>starting point for local authorities just starting on the Emergency Planning Best Value review process. An individual local authority could take the model off the shelf, analyse it and then apply it to their own circumstances.</p> <p>It was also commented that whilst this model would work of Emergency Planning being tackled as a single-service review it would need modification if the service was to be tackled as a cross-cutting/corporate issue or as part of a multi-agency review.</p>
8.	<p>Has your Best Value review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If you had to undertake the review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?</p>	<p>The Review has had a light touch 'desk top' inspection. 2 Best Value Inspectors spent 1 hour 20 minutes interviewing the Chief Emergency Planning Officer. At the end of the interview the Inspectors explained that the review was not going to be scored ie judgements of 'how good is the service?' or 'will the service improve?' are not made by the inspectors for desk top inspections, and the results are not published on the Audit Commissions website. This form of inspection was demoralising and annoying as it did not analyse the review in-depth, it did not give reflect the enormous amount of work undertaken and did not provide adequate constructive criticism. During the interview the Inspectors acknowledged that Best Value Inspectors in different regions were tackling Emergency Planning inspections in different ways. The Inspectors did provide feedback to the authority in the form of a letter containing their general findings of the 4 reviews they looked at ie Emergency Planning, Economic Development, Walking and Cycling and Invoices. The following was stated about the Emergency Planning review:</p> <p>"Following this inspection we would like to make the following specific comments. The review demonstrates the close partnership working between the Emergency Planning Unit and other voluntary and emergency services within [name of authority]. Future developments in partnership working with [names of Shire Districts] are to be welcomed as a positive way forward.</p> <p>There are currently no national performance indicators for Emergency Planning services (although we understand they are in the process of being developed) and local indicators are limited. However, comparison with other councils did take place. The ongoing work with the benchmarking group to develop performance indicators is welcomed and should provide useful comparative data in the future.</p>

		<p>The current level of staffing within the service appears to be based on historic factors. There is no evidence within the review that the level of staffing is clearly matched to current service requirements.</p> <p>Given current Home Office views regarding competition for Emergency Planning services, the opportunity to explore this further during the review was limited. However, we note that future developments in this area will be kept under consideration.</p> <p>The Action Plan, which covers the period until 2005, clearly identifies actions which should lead to an improvement in the service provided. However, the majority of these actions relate to structure and processes, not to service outcomes.</p> <p>Although not all the results are evident at the present time, some initial actions that will have a positive impact have already been completed. These include making the Unit responsible to the Assistant Chief Executive, developing risk and vulnerability indices and links with neighbouring authorities through the cross border group.</p> <p>We felt that the Unit should consider ways in which it could raise its profile with the elected members. This would establish greater understanding and awareness of the Unit's work. We believe this would compliment the positive actions already taken to raise the profile of the service with council officers. It would be helpful if the Action Plan was revised so that the outcomes were clearer to a wider audience.</p> <p>Following discussions with your staff, we consider that the actions you have set yourself as part of the improvement plan should deliver improvements in service delivery. ....</p> <p>This letter has been prepared by the Audit Commission following an inspection by the Commission under Section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999. This inspection was compiled following a review of the documentation and written evidence submitted by you. The Best Value Inspection Service reserves the right to carry out further inspection following a review of documentary evidence. A copy of this letter has been forwarded to your District Auditor".</p> <p>The progress of the improvement plan is being monitored internally within the Shire County Council. Every 3 months the Chief Emergency Planning Officer must provide a progress report to the portfolio holder and the corporate management team. (Note: the Review team disbanded at the end of the review).</p> <p>With the benefit of hindsight the service should have been reviewed as a corporate, cross</p>
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9.	Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to Emergency Planning?	<p>cutting issue. Ideally it should have been a multi-authority review.</p> <p>Within the Shire County Council the aim is now to have Best Value Reviews which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- externally focused – to ensure that reviews will lead to improvements that services make in the daily lives of users and the general public</li> <li>- issue based – thematic reviews, which avoid drowning in detail, and which drive the priorities of the council as well as the Government, and which will link to local public service agreements</li> <li>- cross-organisation – reviews of services where there are dependencies with other organisations ie where the Council cannot deliver improvements on its own.</li> <li>- Services which are defined as being 'weaker'</li> </ul>
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Notes Of Follow-Up Interview With Interviewee Four Held On 28 January 2002 (notes agreed with Interviewee Four via e-mail on 30 January 2002)

Question No.	Question	Response
1	What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Which aspects were the least valuable?	<p>Most valuable: The Review confirmed what we already knew ie the service cannot be provided externally as local knowledge and knowledge of the internal workings of the authority are essential.</p> <p>Least valuable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the process was very time consuming and entailed producing numerous reports – how can this be classed as ‘efficient’?</li> <li>- the process was undertaken with the Emergency Planning Officer leading the review – how can this ensure that self-interest does not play a part in the final outcome?</li> </ul>
2	What specific aspects of the Emergency Planning service have been improved by Best Value?	<p>The areas of improvement were classed in 3 main areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. communications</li> <li>2. service performance</li> <li>3. public awareness</li> </ol> <p>The following specific aspects of the service have improved because of Best Value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identified aspects of the service which should be in place but are not</li> <li>- changed the format of the plan and put it onto CD-ROM making vast monetary savings</li> <li>- incorporated a better use of information technology into the service saving both time, money and improving the accuracy of Emergency Planning data eg e-mails are issued monthly detailing revised contact details etc.</li> <li>- increased training, particularly in the area of awareness raising</li> <li>- a training database has been created</li> <li>- there is now a link between the Emergency Planning Officer and the authority’s Business Continuity Group thereby ensuring the Emergency Plan and Business Continuity Plan can dovetail together</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- debriefing will take place after incidents to ensure that lessons are learnt</li> <li>- the resource database has been improved</li> <li>- there is greater emphasis upon sharing information with neighbouring local authorities and other partner organisations.</li> </ul> <p>All of the above improvements are on-going. For the future it is hoped that the following additional improvements take place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a 24 hour call-centre be established</li> <li>- an Emergency Planning update be printed in each edition of the local authority community publication which is printed quarterly and goes to every residence in the Borough. (Note: an article has already been prepared but some Chief Officers are concerned that it may panic, rather than reassure, the public).</li> </ul> <p>The review also identified that the authority met 75% of the Home Office National Standards For Civil Protection. The improvements identified (both for the short-term and long-term) will ensure that the authority meets the standards 100%.</p>
3	It is Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these?	Best Value was the vehicle which allowed the weaknesses to be highlighted and ensure that something was done about them. The Emergency Planning Officer had known about these weaknesses for some time but Chief Officers had been unable to recognise the problems.
4	Are there any aspects of the service which have not improved as a result of Best Value?  How do you know these have not improved? Why have these not improved?	The issue of how external consultants could be used within the Emergency Planning service has not really been addressed. Whilst the review found that no external consultant could provide the service in its entirety several consultants were identified who could perform certain aspects of the service eg business continuity and plan evaluation. The review outcome was to dismiss the service being provided by an external provider. This leaves the unanswered question of what about the role of the external provider in the future?
5	Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and	Two of the C's were relatively easy to apply:  Compare – using the Emergency Planning Officer's own knowledge of external providers

	why?	<p>it was easy to select a range of appropriate consultants and (through questionnaire) obtain information about how they provide their similar service. This information was then compared against how the authority provides the Emergency Planning service. Comparative information was also obtained (via questionnaire) from neighbouring local authorities and the emergency services.</p> <p>Challenge – it was easy to continually keep asking questioning challenging the purpose/method of emergency planning and seeking a rationale. This was a golden opportunity to ask burning questions that had needed addressing for some time. Information gleaned from the other C's fed into the challenge aspect eg a neighbouring Metropolitan Borough Council acts as lead authority for Emergency Planning and would attend Police Gold. This raised the question of how effectively would this lead authority concept work if an incident occurred exclusively in Interviewee Four's area.</p>
6	Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult to apply and why?	<p>Two of the C's were more difficult to apply:</p> <p>Consult - 3 different exercises were undertaken (involving residents recently involved in an incident, organisations that respond to incidents and the authority's citizens panel). Whilst the results received did provide some very good ideas and feedback this aspect of the process was very time consuming. It was questionable whether the citizens panel had enough prior knowledge of Emergency Planning to be able to make an informed opinion. The response rate from the residents recently involved in an incident was very low (23%) and again it is questionable whether they had enough prior knowledge to make an informed opinion. However, these results alone did clearly show that the profile of the service must be raised.</p> <p>Compete – Emergency Planning is a multi-faceted service. Several external consultants could offer parts of the service but none could offer the entire service. No external consultant who was approached would consider providing the operational side of the Emergency Planning service.</p>
7	What resources were used to complete this review? Was the	<p>A review team was established of 7 authority officers and 1 police representative. The Emergency Planning Officer was the review leader and the former Emergency Planning</p>

	<p>level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the review?</p> <p>To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?</p>	<p>Officer had an advisory role (he had transferred to another part of the authority). The cost of the Emergency Planning Officer's time, stationery and printing were met from the Emergency Planning budget. Other resources utilised during the review were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information from past incidents</li> <li>- speaking to other local authority Emergency Planning Officers</li> <li>- speaking to other external organisations</li> </ul> <p>The resources available did produce the desired outcome. However, had more officers and time been available the issue of Emergency Planning performance indicators could have explored and developed further. It was felt that more support could have been provided corporately eg the Best Value report templates were continually changing all of which had timing implications and reduced deadlines.</p> <p>Throughout the review process it was a continuing juggling act to ensure that Emergency Planning and Best Value reporting deadlines were met. Several incidents did occur during the review process including the second wave of fuel shortages and flooding. Operational response had to take priority.</p>
8	<p>Based upon your experiences of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?</p> <p>What do you feel are its strengths?</p> <p>What do you feel are its limitations?</p> <p>Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?</p> <p>To what extent would this model have helped during your review process?</p>	<p>In light of experience from undertaking the Best Value Review I agree with the model. It would have been very useful for the authority when they embarked upon their Emergency Planning Best Value Review.</p> <p>The model clearly explains some of the 'grey' areas of Best Value by clearly stating the questions that need to be addressed. The format of the model could be adapted and applied to any other type of local authority service ie it is an example of good practice.</p> <p>No limitations suggested.</p> <p>Incorporate into the model the theme that Best Value is about continuous improvement. Actions must be continually monitored ie there must be an evaluation aspect such as incident debriefs, training debriefs and lessons are learnt.</p> <p>This model would have helped enormously.</p>

9	<p>Has your Best Value review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? Please describe the inspectorate's findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the inspectorate report what you expected? If you had to undertake the review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?</p>	<p>Yes, the review has been audited. It was a light touch inspection. 1 inspector read the Final Report and Improvement Plan and then met with a selection of stakeholders. This light touch inspection was combined with inspecting the CCTV and out-of-office hours reviews. In total inspection lasted 3 hours (approximately 10am-1pm). The positive points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the inspector "was happy [with the review], well done".</li> <li>- The inspector did have a few minor points and would incorporate them in his written summary to the Chief Executive (Note: the Inspectorate state written feedback was sent to the Chief Executive in November 2001 but the authority have no record of receiving it. This issue is on-going)</li> </ul> <p>The negative points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it was demoralising after such a large amount of work was undertaken to only have a light touch review and therefore not receive a star rating</li> <li>- the 3 hour inspection also incorporated 2 other reviews ie CCTV and out-of-office hours</li> <li>- no written feedback received as yet</li> </ul> <p>The improvement plan is being monitored internally by the authority. The Emergency Planning Officer is required to make 4 monthly progress reports to the Corporate Management Team.</p> <p>Ideally the review should have been lead by an independent officer (either from within or outside of the authority) who had 'no dealings with Emergency Planning'. This approach would have meant the review would have been lead from a very different perspective. The result would have been a much more 'honest' view of the service and its future delivery options.</p>
10	<p>Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to Emergency Planning?</p>	<p>Best Value has been a learning experience.</p> <p>Additional background information given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interviewee Four was appointed to the post of Emergency Planning Officer in November 2000. He was completely new to Best Value. He was told that the Best Value Review of Emergency Planning had to be finished by May 2001.</li> </ul>



		<p>- In his role as Emergency Planning Officer he is also responsible for CCTV. In theory two thirds of his time should be spent on emergency planning and one third on CCTV. In reality 75% of his time is spent on CCTV work.</p>
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Notes Of Follow-Up Interview With Interviewee Five Held On 31 January 2002 (notes agreed with Interviewee Five via e-mail on 5 February 2002)

Question No.	Question	Response
1.	Why do you feel that the service has not improved? Is it possible that the service could improve in the future as a result of the Best Value Review?	<p>I initially took on Best Value responsibility as a favour to retiring Chief Emergency Planning Officer in 1998. At first (early 1999) it was felt that the Best Value process could lead to improvements but concluded from later experience that the approach to be used would not improve the service because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- central government's guidance about Best Value was wordy, vague and not well thought out for application to Emergency Planning</li> <li>- changing guidance from the Shire County Council caused confusion, especially when compared with other advice</li> <li>- constraints imposed on the Review by the Council precluded a proper consideration of the nature of the service</li> </ul> <p>A review considering the location of the Emergency Planning service had only just been completed in late 1999 (this review apparently came about because some councillors wished the Emergency Planning service to be relocated into the Fire Brigade 'because both dealt with emergencies and wrote plans'). At the time when this earlier review was reported, it was envisaged that the Emergency Planning service would be examined under Best Value in Year 4 or 5. Events then overtook this as the County Council finance was capped by Central Government. This was dealt with by a new policy of reducing costs by disposal of Council's outlying centres and re-deployment of the staff to a re-designed open-plan County Hall: moving Emergency Planning from 5 rooms at County Hall to 1 room at Fire Brigade HQ would release space for more re-deployed staff. It was also announced that the Home Office Civil Defence Grant would be cut by 35 % by 2000/01.</p>

	<p>The main constraints then imposed on the Council's Best Value Review of Emergency Planning were that the service should be financed solely by the Home Office Civil Defence Grant with zero contribution from the Council and that the Unit's physical and functional location be re-assessed. At this point it was suspected that a decision had already been made that Best Value would be used during Year 1 to provide an apparently objective route to restructuring the Emergency Planning service and also release funds for other purposes.</p> <p>My role on the Best Value Review Team was changed three times (Review Leader; Team Leader; Review Officer; Officer/Staff Rep) between March and May 2000 (the early stages of the Best Value Review). Coupled with this, the County Council's Best Value Review procedures were frequently revised resulting in confusion and extremely short working deadlines. These factors created an unstable decision making environment. It was strongly felt by all Emergency Planning Officers involved that the result and subsequent outcomes of the Review were effectively determined before the Review was even undertaken ie the Best Value review was to be used to 'rubber stamp' existing decisions, a criticism also expressed as "an artificial limitation" by external Review Team members.</p> <p>During the Review, Emergency Planning staff had no opportunity to place their views as stakeholders on record (although their comments were to be added to the final document at the insistence of the external Review Team. It is unclear whether these comments were ever considered or formed part of the report finally implemented).</p> <p>As a result of the Review the following occurred:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Unit was transferred from its role as an independent departmental section accommodated within County Hall to an integrated section of the</li> </ul>
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		<p>Fire Brigade situated at its HQ site four miles away. [It could be argued that this move contradicts advice in the Home Office Standards for Civil Protection.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Unit went from reporting to the Director of Social Services on corporate and day to day administration and the Chief Executive on operational matters, to reporting immediately to the Chief Fire Officer with a Deputy Chief Fire Officer advising the Chief Executive in emergencies. [This may also contradict the Home Office Standards' advice.]</li> <li>- despite their value, activities that were deemed expensive in relation to staff time and running costs (Parish links, contact data checks, external representation) were scrapped without any replacement/alternative provision being put in place. This effectively saved money in the short-term but seriously reduced the quality of the service and in the event of an emergency could have potential financial implications for the authority eg in terms of future legal claims. These actions undermined the robustness of the service.</li> <li>- Stocks of communications and audio/visual equipment previous held by, maintained and operated by Emergency Planning Officers were scrapped as it was deemed more economical to hire equipment from commercial organisations as required. This made the service totally reliant upon external parties. Familiarity with equipment and procedures are as vital for a successful emergency response as is the flow of information.</li> <li>- Direct EP links with Parish Councils were severed, despite resistance from Emergency Planning Officers and Parish Councils stating this was an extremely valuable service providing a two way information flow direct to the community. It is possible that the loss of these links could affect working relations with these stakeholders.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The cycle of plan review and amendment be lengthened with the proviso of flexibility should the need for major changes arise. This is a reduction in service not an improvement ie plans are more likely to be out of date than accurate.</li> <li>- Disposal of the dedicated emergency centre began before the first Review Team meeting. A working party was to be established, nominated by and reporting to the Chief Executive, to consider alternative arrangements. These decisions meant that the Council did not currently have a dedicated, equipped and maintained area from which to operate its emergency response and training exercises. (Note: unsure whether any dedicated physical support has been restored)</li> <li>- The number of Emergency Planning Officers was reduced from 5 to 4 (then later to 3 and finally 2 at the end of 2001). This seems an unusual decision when Emergency Planning work and awareness of emergencies elsewhere is increasing in light of recent incidents and a National Emergency Planning Review. (Note: all existing Emergency Planning Officer posts were downgraded following incorporation into the Fire Brigade)</li> </ul> <p>The current paper system of recording and logging messages be largely replaced by an electronic system and the feasibility of extending current Emergency Planning incident log programme to all departments electronically be examined. (Note: unsure whether this has been actioned)</p> <p>Overall it is felt that the Final Report did not reflect what respondents to consultation exercises wanted. The Review was very much driven by the need to achieve an instant saving - it was more a case of 'what must be cut to limit costs to the Home Office grant' rather than 'how much of the service needs can be provided</p>	
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		<p>from the funds available'. Although it provided an opportunity to argue for scrapping facilities, this process did not allow a search for cheaper replacements or more efficient alternatives (it seemed that the Review Leader just accepted any requirement imposed by higher sources rather than seek evidence challenge it). The Emergency Planning process was not examined in enough detail; nor did this Best Value process allow some 'problem' areas to be addressed (management practices, inefficient admin working practices, information technology integration): the review did not do the service justice: it was undersold. The way the review proceeded led people to believe the outcomes were pre-determined and this resulted in a negative work atmosphere.</p> <p>It remains to be seen how the Emergency Planning service develops as part of the Fire Brigade – it is too early for a final judgement. However, current concerns (at September 2001) were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that the Emergency Planning service is not corporately owned, being provided in isolation away from the local authority rather than as part of it and lacking an overview of the Council's total emergency response.</li> <li>- there will be attempts to 'brigadify' the service</li> <li>- the service is being drawn into working for the Brigade ie an individual Emergency Planning Officer's time and effort will be split between providing the Emergency Planning service and servicing Fire Brigade requirements (something that it is not meant to do according to the Grant regulations)</li> <li>- the location of Brigades Headquarters (4 miles away from County Hall) means that the Emergency Planning Officers do not have direct personal day-to-day access to the Officers in other Departments (reliance on 'phone or email is no substitute for informal networking)</li> <li>- the lack of identity between the focus of the emergency services and that of the local authorities in preparing and responding to an emergency (vastly differing perspectives with little understanding of the others role)</li> </ul>
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		<p>It is very difficult to see how the other actions in the Improvement Plan will enhance the service as too much in the way of resources, expertise and links has been lost and cannot be regained without making a considerable investment in the service. I believe the quality of Emergency Planning service of the Shire County Council is poorer now after a Best Value Review than it was before the Review.</p>
2.	<p>Did you find any aspect of the Best Value process valuable? Which aspects were the least valuable?</p>	<p>The Compare aspect of the Review was valuable because it raised awareness as to how other local authorities provided their Emergency Planning service. The Consult aspect was also valuable as it provided the opportunity to find out what responding agencies and organisations thought about our Emergency Planning service.</p> <p>The least valuable were Challenge and Compete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Challenge</u> because it was not tackled in an open and objective way ie it was a 'fudge'. The remit of challenge was not wide enough eg several other County Council departments produce their own 'emergency' plans over which the Emergency Planning Unit had little or no influence – these plans were identified, but their production not addressed during the Review process. Neither were any mechanisms explored for making Emergency Planning aware whether further plans for corporate response might exist nor for co-ordinating and collating these and related cross-cutting Emergency Planning issues.</li> <li>- <u>Compete</u> because it was little more than CCT in disguise: if there is no external service provider one would still have to be created in order to put a tick in the box and complete the process. The greatest difficulty was in determining the potential values and costs of externally provided elements of the Emergency Planning service. Time spent on this aspect was wasted since any such provision was specifically excluded during consideration of</li> </ul>

		the Final Report.
3.	Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's did you find most easy to apply and why?	<p><u>Compare</u> was the easiest to undertake. A nearby local authority were also undertaking a review and a joint decision was made to send a questionnaire to my local authority's 15 CIPFA Nearest Neighbour authorities (nearest in terms of rurality, economies etc) plus one member of the Regional Emergency Planning group (absent from the CIPFA list) and one other local authority as a wildcard representing more industrialised authorities. All but one of nearest neighbour authorities sent returns. The nearby local authority gathered and collated the raw data which I then analysed for my review.</p> <p>When examining the data transcription errors were found in entries for my authority and from the nature of other responses, it became doubtful that all respondents were interpreting the questions in the same way. As there was no time to correct possible errors, it would therefore be naïve and simplistic to take the data purely at face value and rely on interpretation of these initial results for anything other than the most general support for consequential actions. In at attempt to reduce the effects of any erroneous data, to produce some valid conclusions and generate potential Performance Indices, elements of the comparative data were combined to provide indications of potential hazards, main activities and wider functions. It is not clear whether the nature of these results was appreciated or considered in the final deliberations.</p> <p><u>Consult</u> was similarly straightforward except that the questionnaire had to be designed in-house and included several opportunities for open-ended responses which were less easy to analyse than the numerical ones.</p>
4.	Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult to	<p>Both <u>Challenge</u> and <u>Compete</u> were difficult to apply:</p> <p>- <u>Challenge</u> – It was felt that the approach used to challenge the service was</p>



	<p>apply and why?</p>	<p>simplistic and deliberately avoided many of the difficult questions which should have been asked. In reality how can you assess productivity with no performance information data? It was felt that many of the challenge questions which should have been asked could only be answered and addressed by central government and not by any local authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Compete</u> - because there was no outward investigation. Several external providers were identified via the internet, current collaborative planning plus a neighbouring Chief Emergency Planning Officer and former (now consultant) Emergency Planning Officer colleague. All were then approached by letter seeking their interest. Some responded and wanted more information. It was stated in the Best Value Report (August 2000) "that the whole service could be provided by 1 responder (no proven track record), parts of service by 2 responders, partnership working by 3 responders (with varying degrees of keenness). Timescale would not allow investigations to be concluded so for externalisation aspects Chief Emergency Planning Officer should contact interested parties and arranges series of meetings to gauge extent of seriousness while for partnership working, the Chief Emergency Planning Officer would actively pursues options with identified parties"</li> </ul> <p>It was felt that this aspect of the Review could have been explored more fully but that self-interest ensured that it was not. This effectively meant that the <u>Compete</u> aspect of the review became a 'tick in the box' exercise. A point to note is that if this option had been chosen then the County Council would have had to pay the external provider even though they did not currently plan to make any financial contribution to top up the Civil Defence Grant allocation.</p>
5.	<p>What resources were used to complete this review? Was the level of resource, appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what</p>	<p>After some initial indecision the Chief Emergency Planning Officer appointed himself Team Leader, chaired the bulk of Review Team meetings, and wrote reports. I initially represented Emergency Planning interests and concerns on the Chief Executive's Best Value Co-ordinator's Group and the Consultation Co-</p>

	<p>extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?</p>	<p>ordination Group. At the end of May 2000 the Chief Emergency Planning Officer took over both these roles so that he became the sole interface for the Emergency Planning Unit in discussions that affected our future with key internal and external Best Value groups. This effectively blocked any presentation of either alternative views or supporting evidence for discussion, and simultaneously provided a singular source of information for Emergency Planning staff.</p> <p>Initially Emergency Planning Officers were not deemed to be stakeholders in the service, however, once it became apparent that a redundancy was to be made Emergency Planning Officers were deemed stakeholders as was the appropriate trade union representative. The workload involved in the Review was large – it consumed a considerable amount of staff time (and therefore ultimately money).</p> <p>No, it was not appropriate. With a longer timescale (ie a minimum of 12 months), access to admin support and more Emergency Planning Officer involvement, the Review could actually have tackled the real issues which are paramount to Emergency Planning and ultimately more would have been achieved. (Note: The Review commenced on 31.1.00 and had to be completed by 24.7.00 in order to meet committee deadlines). It was felt that a serious flaw in the consultation aspect of the review was the decision made not to include residents perhaps because the Parish Contact network had been removed from direct operational response at the end of 1999 despite the clear Best Value requirement for resident consultation. More time and greater resources would have allowed this decision to be challenged.</p> <p>Frequent amendments and changes to the Shire County Council's corporate approach to Best Value did dictate the flow of the review ie meant that deadlines became shorter and only a certain amount of work could be completed in that timescale. Some work could not be attempted or remained in draft form.</p> <p>The resources for this review were not dedicated resources ie all officers had other 'full-time' jobs to complete. Priorities had to be constantly re-assessed throughout</p>
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		which meant that the review process was demanding and stressful when combined with normal day-to-day tasks. Both the Review and implementation of the outcomes seriously interfered with the normal functioning of the unit to delay delivery or otherwise reduce the quality of the service.
6.	Based upon your experience of Best Value in Emergency Planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model?	<p>Re: local authority Emergency Management diagram:  in liaison box under outcomes insert 'increased awareness'  in middle block under legislation insert 'quality standards'  in middle block after both funding and politics insert '(local and national)'  in middle block under politics insert 'Chief Officers attitude'  in immediate response box under activities move 'support emergency services' to follow after 'set up crisis management team'  in immediate response box under outcomes insert as final point 'improved or diminished reputation of council'</p> <p>Re: Best Value applied to Emergency Management model and diagrams:  Diagram 1 – compare circle – 4th question should read 'How much do the planning, liaison and training phases of the service compare with those of other local authorities?'</p> <p>Diagram 1 – consult – 1st question should read 'Do you consult with external stakeholders about the nature of the entire package of the Emergency Management service?'</p> <p>Diagram 1 – consult – insert a 2nd question 'Do you consult with internal stakeholders about the nature of the entire package of the Emergency Management service?'</p> <p>Diagram 2 – challenge – 6th question should read 'Do your Emergency Plans cover all the risks in your area?'</p> <p>Diagram 2 – compete – insert 'Whose plans could you write besides those for your own authority?'</p> <p>Diagram 2 – consult – 1st question should read 'How do you select who to consult?'</p> <p>Diagram 2 – consult – insert 3rd question 'Why are you consulting these</p>

		<p>stakeholders?’</p> <p>Diagram 5 – challenge – 2nd question should read ‘What type of emergencies does the local authority become involved in and why?’</p> <p>Diagram 5 – challenge – insert 3rd question ‘What type of emergencies does the local authority not become involved in and why?’</p> <p>Diagram 5 – compete – 1st question should read ‘Are there any external agencies that can better deliver the overall local authority response?’</p> <p>Diagram 5 – compete – 2nd question should read ‘Are there any external agencies that can better deliver part of the local authority response?’</p> <p>Comment – beware of concentrating only on aspects that are easily measured and then giving that a high importance above that of harder to measure aspects. Incorporate into Diagram 4 the training of Emergency Planning Officers.</p>
7.	Has your Best Value review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate?	<p>I am unsure whether the Review has been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate because I have now retired from the authority.</p>
8.	If you had to undertake the review again what, if anything would you have done differently and why?	<p>The Home Office Standards for Civil Protection are intended to apply authority-wide. There should be a clear corporate commitment to Emergency Planning such that the total contribution of the authority to the service should be Reviewed in its entirety.</p> <p>Comparison with other Authorities should have been carried out according to the Best Value benchmarking guidelines (ie with face-to-face interviews to reduce errors) and there should have been consultation with residents.</p>
9.	Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to Emergency Planning?	<p>Since a National Review of Emergency Planning was initiated during the first full year of Best Value Reviews, perhaps no Emergency Planning Best Value Review should have taken place until the conclusions of the National Review were known. However, no guidance was issued in this respect, so my Review was based on instructions currently available.</p> <p>There was a lack of specific Best Value guidance for Emergency Planning. Whilst the Home Office Standards for Civil Protection outline key areas of the Emergency</p>

	<p>Planning service, they do not provide the detailed/quantitative aspects that are needed for Best Value investigations. Further, there appeared to be no overview of whether Local Authorities may impose constraints on Emergency Planning reviews that conflict with the clear advice in the Home Office Standards. Neither does there seem to be any route by which attention may be drawn to consequences of reviews that will inevitably reduce the quality or extent of the Emergency Planning service in conflict with Best Value requirements</p> <p>The application of the general Best Value process to such small groups of individuals with such wide and complex remits and finance virtually limited to staff salaries, cannot be sufficiently rigorous to produce fundamental improvements without an additional commitment of adequate time and resources. Nor will the results truly represent Best Value if arbitrary local constraints are imposed. The service should always be reviewed as a cross-cutting issue with time and resources allocated that are appropriate to a serious investigation. However, the <u>Compete</u> element of the Best Value process can only be sensibly explored once the current costs of delivering the service (including any revisions planned in the light of local needs and best practice revealed by the other 3 Cs) have been determined.</p> <p>Best Value requires all services to compare themselves to others. However, the current situation is that there are no national performance indicators for Emergency Planning, so as comparison based on local performance indicators cannot generate a joint distribution, it makes a mockery of the requirement to aim for the top 25% quartile – the term is meaningless in this form. Nevertheless, this has resulted in a large number of local authority Emergency Planning Officers getting together in small groups around the country trying to benchmark and create their own performance indicators when in reality the production of Emergency Planning performance indicators should be the responsibility of the Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Office should not only produce the performance indicators but also collect the data annually in order to determine how effective the service provision is locally, regionally and nationally.</p>
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	<p>Although it was felt that in the earliest stages of Best Value there was little tangible support from the Emergency Planning Society, this was rectified later by a series of one-day workshops around the country which proved to be very valuable. Later Emergency Planning Society input into the National Review may also prove to be more productive in the long term.</p> <p>The Best Value Review turned into a huge paper exercise of no real value to the residents of the County as they ultimately ended up with an Emergency Planning service of a lower standard than they had before the Review. Any later improvement will be due to the application of careful thought to and support for the whole Emergency Planning process as it relates to local area needs.</p>	
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Question No.	Question	Response
1	What was your perception of Best Value prior to undertaking your own Review?	<p>The following perceptions of Best Value applied prior to undertaking an actual review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it was just another task (a very bureaucratic task)</li> <li>- it was not a particularly precise process</li> <li>- would probably not achieve in terms of creating change or improving the service</li> <li>- the process was still evolving</li> <li>- was unsure about the Inspection process</li> <li>- ultimately had little confidence in the process resulting in a positive outcome</li> </ul>
2.	What is your perception of Best Value now that you have undertaken your own Review?	<p>Following an actual review the perception of Best Value did change. Best Value enabled necessary change which was absolutely vital to the service's progress ie it brought real issues to a head which were then tackled and resolved. Real, meaning full change has resulted from the process and the service is now 'owned', expectations have increased and the professional standing of the service has improved. The service is now in a position to deal with the outcomes of the Cabinet Office Review in Emergency Planning whatever they will be.</p>
3.	What did you find the most valuable aspect of the Best Value process? Which aspect was the least valuable?	<p>Valuable aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having elected members and senior officers who 'saw through' the original process and insisted on a more radical approach. This was then backed up by their support throughout the remainder of the process.</li> <li>- The ethos surrounding the service has changed as a direct result of the review.</li> <li>- The review has set a template for the future delivery of the service.</li> <li>- The review did highlight some areas of officer time which could be employed more effectively eg a considerable amount of time was spent</li> </ul>

		<p>maintaining the Emergency Communication Network (ECN) and radio equipment rather than looking at newer forms of communication.</p> <p>Least valuable aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Being one of the first services to be reviewed in the authority made the process extra difficult eg the initial report was one of the first to be presented to elected members – members had not been consulted prior to the report being submitted – this revealed a fault in the corporate Best Value process which was then rectified. (Note: The Part 1 report was rejected by elected members for not being challenging enough and lacked ambition for the future of the service)</li> <li>- Lack of expertise in certain areas (Example: there were no specialist skills in questionnaire compilation – a neighbouring local authority devised a questionnaire which another local authority then took to gather raw data and collate the findings. It was discovered at this point that some invalid questions were asked)</li> <li>- The process created an enormous workload at a time when the service was experiencing an unprecedented state of emergencies.</li> </ul>
4.	<p>What specific aspects of the Emergency Planning service have been improved by Best Value?</p>	<p>There are many ways in which the service has improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The direction of the service has changed. The department is now called 'Emergency Management' rather than 'Emergency Planning'. The focus of the service is now very much proactive rather than reactive. Local authorities are now faced with numerous unusual situations which are historically not classed as Emergency Planning issues but which so have an impact as the incident can seriously affect the reputation of the authority and affect the local community eg the murder of an elected member while working in a surgery as an agent for the local Liberal Democrat MP – this created vast media interest, public concern about safety etc. The department is now the first contact for the County Council in an emergency and will make an assessment regarding that actions that need to be taken.</li> <li>- Control – the focus of the service is now on incident preparation and involvement. There is a greater focus on results than at any time before.</li> <li>- Ownership of the service was previously a problem. As a result of the</li> </ul>



		<p>Review the profile of the service has increased and the service is now 'owned' by the officers – we have gone beyond the 1993 Home Office advice to Emergency Planners which indicated a lack of involvement at the time of an incident</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- authority and chief officers/elected members have accepted their responsibilities.</li> <li>- The service is more focused - task orientated and managed</li> <li>- The Emergency Management Team now have a new skills base. 2 long-serving officers retired from the service and 2 new officers were appointed with responsibility for new areas of work - business continuity and public information strategy (Note: a public information strategy is essential as the public's expectations are continually increasing. Helplines which were established during the Fuel Crisis, CSG fire and Foot and Mouth outbreaks were welcomed and used fully proving there is a real need for this type of facility).</li> <li>- The core functions of the service were reviewed and amended appropriately. The service cannot be everything to everyone – there are times when it is necessary to say 'no' – but there needed to be more ownership of the problem.</li> </ul>
5.	Is it Best Value that has improved the service, has it been other factors or was it a combination of these?	<p>The improvements in the service are due to a combination of factors (lessons learned during unprecedented spate of emergencies and the appointment part way through the process of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer as the service's line manager) but in the main centred on Best Value ie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the service had little involvement with elected members prior to Best Value. Elected members were key decision makers during the Best Value process and hence their awareness of the service, its aims and objectives has risen as a result. Elected members have maintained their interest in the service following completion of the Review and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer regularly briefs them on progress.</li> </ul>
6.	Are there any aspects of the service that	The issue of outsourcing was not addressed properly. The service has committed to

	have not improved as a result of Best Value?	<p>look at this issue in more detail in the next financial year. A concern is that whilst external providers could offer certain parts of the service they would not be able to provide any assistance during periods of emergency response ie an Emergency Planner working on a training project could leave that project and assist in emergency response – this provides greater flexibility and ensures quick response times.</p> <p>The issue of consulting with the general public was also not addressed during the Review process. Again the service has committed itself to look at this in detail in the coming financial year. There are, however, concerns about this area – Why? What value will the results have? Is it actually appropriate? (Note: Strongly believe that public consultation is important for other more appropriate local authority departments but not convinced that Emergency Management is one of those departments). Our public are the organisations and agencies who respond and these were consulted very fully.</p> <p>Both of these points were decided by the Audit Commission Inspectors before their inspection – they were guilty of some dogma and did not want to listen to the County Council's view and rationale.</p>
7.	Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most easy to apply and why?	<p>Consultation was easy to apply because it was relatively straightforward ie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The service already had comprehensive liaison contacts already in place.</li> <li>- Developed a number of questionnaires to internal and external stakeholders (questionnaires were similar with slightly different slants for internals and externals)</li> <li>- Good response rates were achieved and the findings were very positive</li> </ul> <p>As mentioned earlier the Audit Commission Inspectors came in to inspection with a fixed view regarding public consultation and made recommendations accordingly.</p>
8.	Which aspect of the Best Value process (ie which of the 4 C's) did you find most difficult to apply and why?	<p>Compete was the most difficult to apply ie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it was not done thoroughly</li> <li>- it did require considerable thought and work (the Best Value Report Part 1</li> </ul>

		<p>took the view that there was no need for change and tried to justify that without providing evidence. For the Report Part 2 there was little time to research so reference was made to the approaches and findings of other local authorities ie no one provider could offer the complete service. Even if certain aspects of the service were outsourced there would still be a need for local input).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More work is now needed in this area as a result of the Audit Commission Inspectors comments.</li> </ul> <p>It was also felt that the challenge aspect of the review could have been undertaken more comprehensively.</p>
9.	<p>What resources were used to complete this review? Was the level of resource appropriate for what you wanted to do? To what extent did the level of resource dictate the flow of the review? To what extent was the resource detracted from day to day service delivery?</p>	<p>The entire review was done in-house (Part 1 by Chief Emergency Planning Officer and Part 2 by Senior Emergency Planning Officer (now Head of Emergency Management Service)). There were no extra funds or staff made available – all costs were met from the service's existing budget. All staff inputted to the Review process as all were involved in enquiries, questionnaires and research. This was at the same time as dealing with various emergencies and it became very difficult to undertake a genuine review.</p> <p>The level of resource could have been appropriate it is difficult to say due to the number of emergencies which were on-going at the same time.</p> <p>The flow of the review was dictated by 2 factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the number of emergencies which were on-going at the same time as the review – emergency response had to be the first priority which left little time to focus on the actual review</li> <li>- it is questionable how a genuine radical review can be undertaken by an officer who had headed the service for 6 years and been in the department for 18 years. This raises the question of who is the correct person to be review team leader. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer did ask for an independent reviewing officer but the Public Protection Committee did not agree to that. The second stage of the review was done by an officer who, in his previous career, had past experience of inspections and had a practical</li> </ul>

		and realistic view of what the service should be delivering and achieving. Perhaps it should have been led by an outside officer from the start?
10.	<p>Based upon your experiences of Best Value in emergency planning to what extent do you agree/disagree with this model? What do you feel are its strengths? What do you feel are its limitations? Can you suggest any modifications to improve it?</p> <p>To what extent would this model have helped during your review process?</p>	<p>In broad agreement with the model.</p> <p>It applies to the entire service including operational response.</p> <p>No limitations but have several minor amendments to suggest.</p> <p>Re: local authority Emergency Management model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on the preparation side of the diagram insert a box for public information</li> <li>- under the operations side of the diagram consider carefully the wording of each task ie is it the local authority's role the diagram is defining (to adopt buildings for use as ...) of the role of the emergency management service (to arrange/to organise/to ensure that ...)</li> <li>- under the operations side of the diagram use the term 'rest centres'</li> <li>- feel that the provision of counselling should be addressed in the long-term recovery phase as a welfare issue</li> </ul> <p>Re: Best Value applied to local authority Emergency Management model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- need to make the overarching model more reader friendly and appealing to the eye.</li> <li>- need better explanation of how the model and accompanying diagrams relate to each other. Consider saying 'sample questions in Diagram 1'.</li> <li>- in the overarching model keep changing the preamble (don't keep saying 'Ask questions in relation to ...') eg question how and why you provide an Emergency Planning service.</li> <li>- box the individual elements of the Emergency Management service and each of the 4 C's in the overarching model</li> <li>- consider linking in the 5<sup>th</sup> C (continuous improvement)</li> </ul> <p>It would have offered a good starting point thereby setting the scene and saving time.</p>

11.	<p>Has your Best Value Review been audited by the Best Value Inspectorate? If Yes, please describe the Inspectorate's findings. What were the positive aspects of the audit? What were the negative aspects of the audit? Was the Inspectorate report what you expected? If you had to undertake the Review again what, if anything, would you have done differently and why?</p>	<p>Yes the Review was inspected by 2 Best Value Inspectors over a period of 5 days. The inspectors made 2 judgements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. how good is the service being inspected?</li> <li>2. how likely is it to improve?</li> </ol> <p>Inspectors examined documents before visits eg Best Value Review of Emergency Planning documents, service plan, Emergency Management Department's annual report, Best Value Performance Plan, reports, Cabinet Office discussion document.</p> <p>They then undertook reality checks to gather evidence and see what it is like to use the service and how well it works. Included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- focus group of district officers</li> <li>- focus group of stakeholders</li> <li>- attended course by British Transport Police</li> <li>- visit to village to talk to residents</li> <li>- telephone interviews – stakeholders, district officers and councillors</li> </ul> <p>Inspectorate Findings: How good is the service? Good because it has clear and challenging aims and strong links to corporate aims. It conforms to Government expectations. Recent major emergencies allowed service to prove its effectiveness and public satisfaction is generally high. Some innovative schemes are in place.</p> <p>How is service likely to improve? Review completed in September 2000 and rejected by Public Protection Committee who wanted more challenge, greater clarity and more councillor involvement. Focus of 2<sup>nd</sup> review (completed by March 2001) was of greater challenge and more radical consideration of future role of department in short and long term. Did this by introducing a challenge panel. However, no public consultation took place. Inspectorate believe public is ultimate user of service and therefore should be consulted. Need a say on scope of service and effectiveness of delivery from user point of view. Especially useful after major emergencies. Could have used County Council's Citizen Panel.</p>
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	<p>Made good attempts to compare despite lack of national data. But no comparisons were made in order to compare the service, or its components of it, with the private sector.</p> <p>Not adequately considered competition or outsourcing whole/part of service. Identified areas of potential income generation. Positive these initiatives would encourage continued efforts in this area in order to maintain income potential.</p> <p>It was noted that there are no 'best 25% national statistics' for this service. It was felt that improvements are appropriate, aimed at improving the right things and supported by Council.</p> <p><b>Overall Rating:</b> The Audit Commission's view is that the emergency management service is good and is likely to improve (ie 2 stars were awarded).</p> <p><b>Inspection Identified:</b> <b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- has clear and challenging aims; strong links to corporate aims and conforms to government expectations</li> <li>- public satisfaction generally high</li> <li>- some innovative schemes in place</li> <li>- service compares well with others</li> </ul> <p>(Believe the Emergency Management service will improve because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Best Value Review was challenging (significant improvement already resulted)</li> <li>- Included attempts to compare service and consult with shareholders</li> <li>- Improvements are appropriate)</li> </ul> <p><b>Aspects for attention:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cost of service slightly above average and rising</li> <li>- staff training needs to be assessed and evaluated</li> <li>- public awareness needs raising</li> </ul> <p>(Number of concerns about Best Value Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- public were not consulted during the Review</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- competitive alternatives were not adequately considered</li> <li>- more effective if district councils had been involved</li> <li>- monitoring service performance at corporate level to ensure service continues to be effective and efficient in achieving its aims, objectives and planned improvements)</li> </ul> <p>Another positive aspect of the inspection was the preparation (in advance of the inspectors visit) of an evidence file which was in effect a centralised reference source outlining the organisational structure, the plans produced by the Unit, actions plans etc. This is now a valuable resource which is to be continually updated and maintained.</p> <p>The negative aspects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it took a tremendous amount of time organising the inspectors timetable in advance of their visit eg organising meetings and visits etc.</li> <li>- the comments made by the inspectors regarding the public consultation aspect of the review seemed to be pre-imposed and they did not appreciate/consider the County Council's rationale (Note: the inspectors were unable to define 'the public' or give examples of what questions to ask them).</li> <li>- The inspectors wanted to meet stakeholders and get their perceptions. Some of the quotes printed in the inspectors report were misrepresentations. This is only one way of investigating and it did not provide confirmed evidence. There was little emphasis given by the inspectors to 'real' evidence eg letters, reports etc.</li> </ul> <p>The Inspectorates report was a fair assessment of the service and its review.</p> <p>The issue of who should lead the review should be given considerable thought. It is an unusual area of work and whoever leads the Review must be both understanding and sympathetic. Consider Emergency Planning Officers from other local authorities? It is essential that we tap into the experiences and findings from other Emergency Planning Best Value Reviews and share information between Units.</p>
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12.	Do you have any additional comments you would like to make about your experiences of applying Best Value to Emergency Planning?	No additional comments.
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**APPENDIX S – PROTOTYPE MODEL DEVELOPED TO  
IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BEST  
VALUE REVIEW**

### Guidance Notes For Prototype Model Use:

1. This model should be used alongside a local authority's corporately agreed approach to conducting a Best Value Review which should include details of how services are to be reviewed (i.e. as a stand-alone service or a cross-cutting issue) and the membership requirements of Review teams.
2. A copy of this model should be distributed to each Review team member at the start of an Emergency Management Best Value Review process. The aim of the Model's top-tier is to familiarise all members with the full remit of the service under Review. The subsequent middle and bottom tiers should be considered fully before finalising the Review timetable and workload.
3. The model should be referenced continually throughout the Review to ensure that no area for investigation are overlooked or not addressed in sufficient detail. Such continual referencing will assist Review teams in obtaining the necessary detail upon which to diagnose the current service delivered.
4. The purpose of this model is to elicit detailed narrative responses that allow Review teams to critically and reflectively evaluate current service delivery so that a self-assessment diagnose can be made of service performance. The questions contained within the prototype have been developed to ensure that an Emergency Management service complies with the requirements of Best Value. This compliance can only be achieved if all questions are fully considered and investigated, therefore no question should be ignored or avoided and responses must be more informed than merely presenting a bland description of current service delivery.
5. This model should be used towards the end of a Review process to assist teams in preparing for internal and external audits to ensure that all investigation findings, documentation and evidence are clearly referenced for subsequent inspection.

# TOP-TIER: THE REMIT OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE:

## PREPARATION (PRE-INCIDENT)

<u>PLANNING</u>	
<b>Activities:</b> Project management Research Consultation Draft emergency plan procedures Identify and allocate resources Set up 24 hour notification systems Publish plan Monitor, review, amend, maintain Plan	<b>Outcomes:</b> Generic Plans Site-specific Plans Consequence-specific Plans Business Continuity Plans 24 hour contact directory Mitigation of risk factors Increased preparedness Better co-ordination

<u>LIAISON</u>	
<b>Activities:</b> Consult community representatives Consult public Chair formal planning groups Consult external stakeholder organisations Advise external stakeholder organisations Public information – media/press Releases, internet etc	<b>Outcomes:</b> Formal multi-agency planning framework Mitigation of risk factors Increased preparedness Increased awareness Public knowledge Public awareness

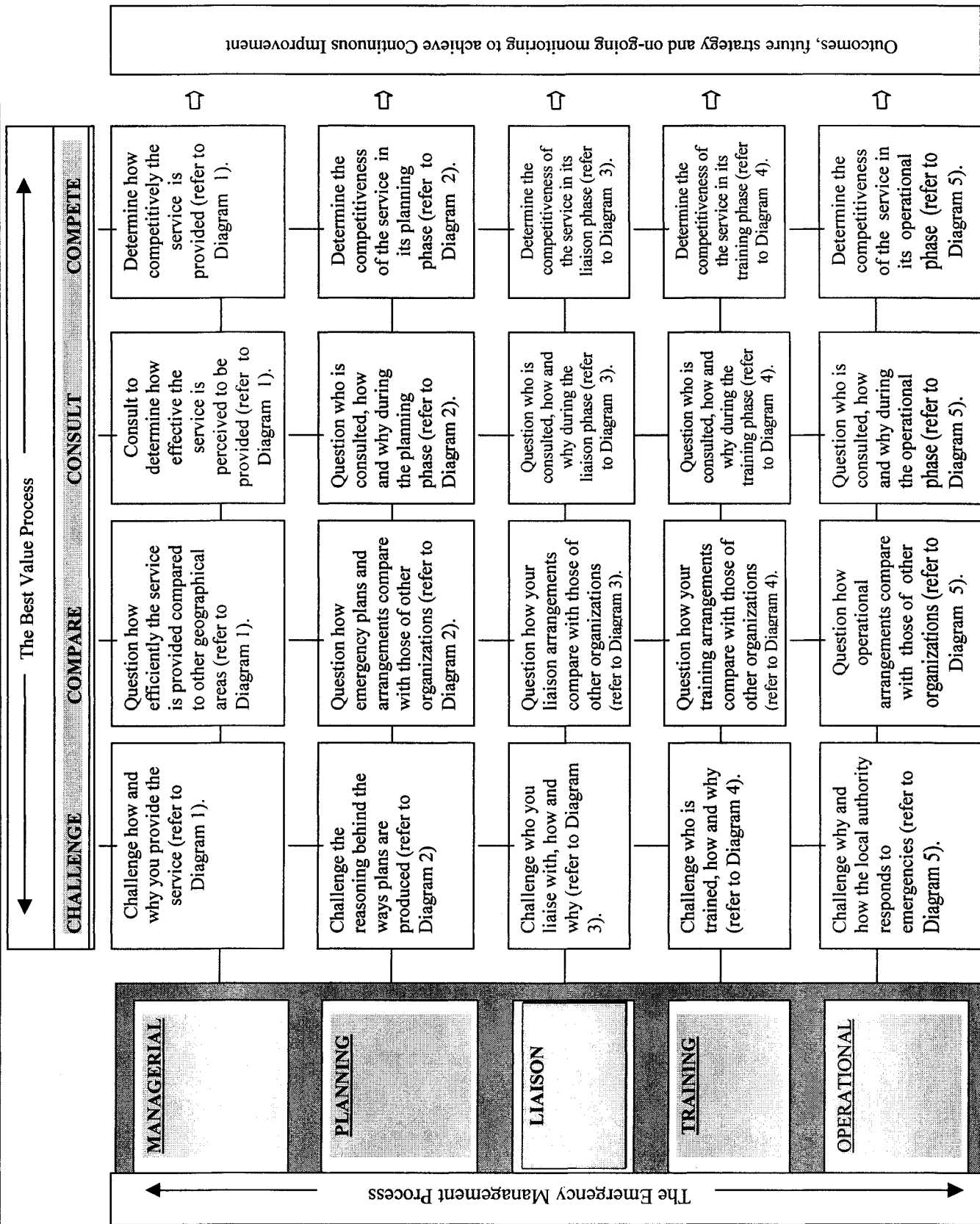
<u>TRAINING</u>	
<b>Activities:</b> Create training strategy Project management Consultation Produce training material Identify participants Run tests and exercises Deliver seminars Produce literature Database of skills, knowledge, training	<b>Outcomes:</b> Awareness raising seminars Table top exercises Live exercises Plan tests Information leaflets Exercise debrief reports Mitigation of risk factors Increased preparedness

## OPERATIONS (POST-INCIDENT)

<u>FACTORS AFFECTING LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROCESSES</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public expectations</li> <li>Risk assessment</li> <li>Legislation</li> <li>Quality standards</li> <li>Funding (local &amp; national)</li> <li>Politics (local &amp; national)</li> <li>Chief Officers attitude</li> <li>Own past experience</li> <li>Others past experience</li> <li>Availability of Emergency Management expertise</li> </ul> <p>(IN BOTH PREPARATIONS AND OPERATIONS PHASE)</p>	

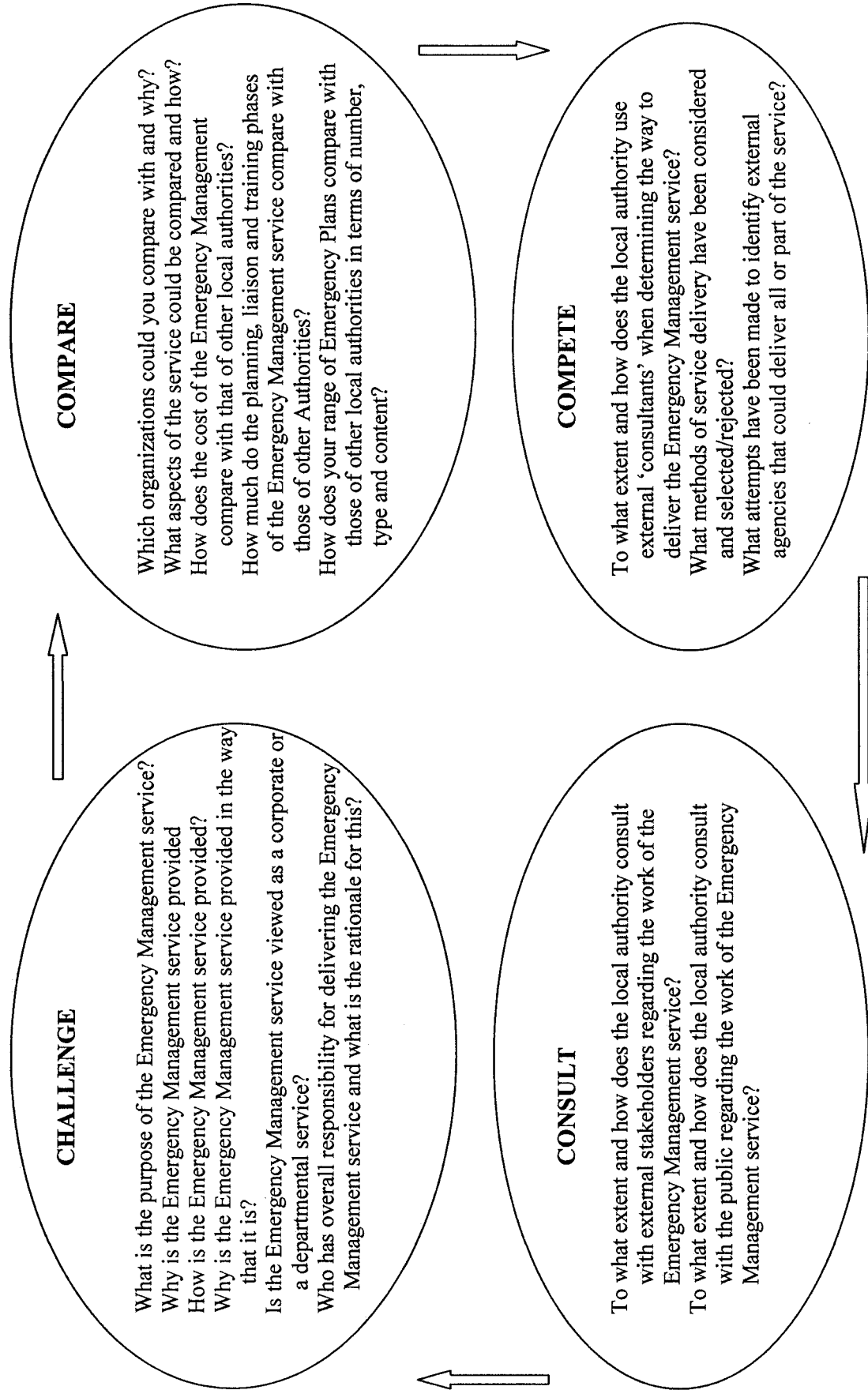
<u>IMMEDIATE RESPONSE</u>	
<b>Activities:</b> Activate Emergency Plans Set up Crisis Management Teams Support emergency services Open Emergency Centres Provide regular media briefings Monitor financial expenditure Arrange for VIP visits Co-ordinate staff recruitment Arrange provision of transport, labour, plant and materials Arrange short-term accommodation Arrange catering/cleaning service Open rest centres Adopt buildings for use as temporary mortuaries Open friends and relatives reception centres Organise welfare arrangements Organise personal support	<b>Outcomes:</b> Mitigate effect on community Short term incident report and debriefs Show of community leadership Improved or diminished reputation of council

<u>LONG-TERM RECOVERY</u>	
<b>Activities:</b> Set up & administer Appeal Fund Arrange memorial services Organise long-term accommodation Organise specialist repair works, or demolition Advise on economic recovery strategies Co-ordinate long-term multi-agency response Assist with restoration of environment Organise long-term personal support	<b>Outcomes:</b> Mitigate effect on community Gradual return to normality Long-term incident report and debriefs

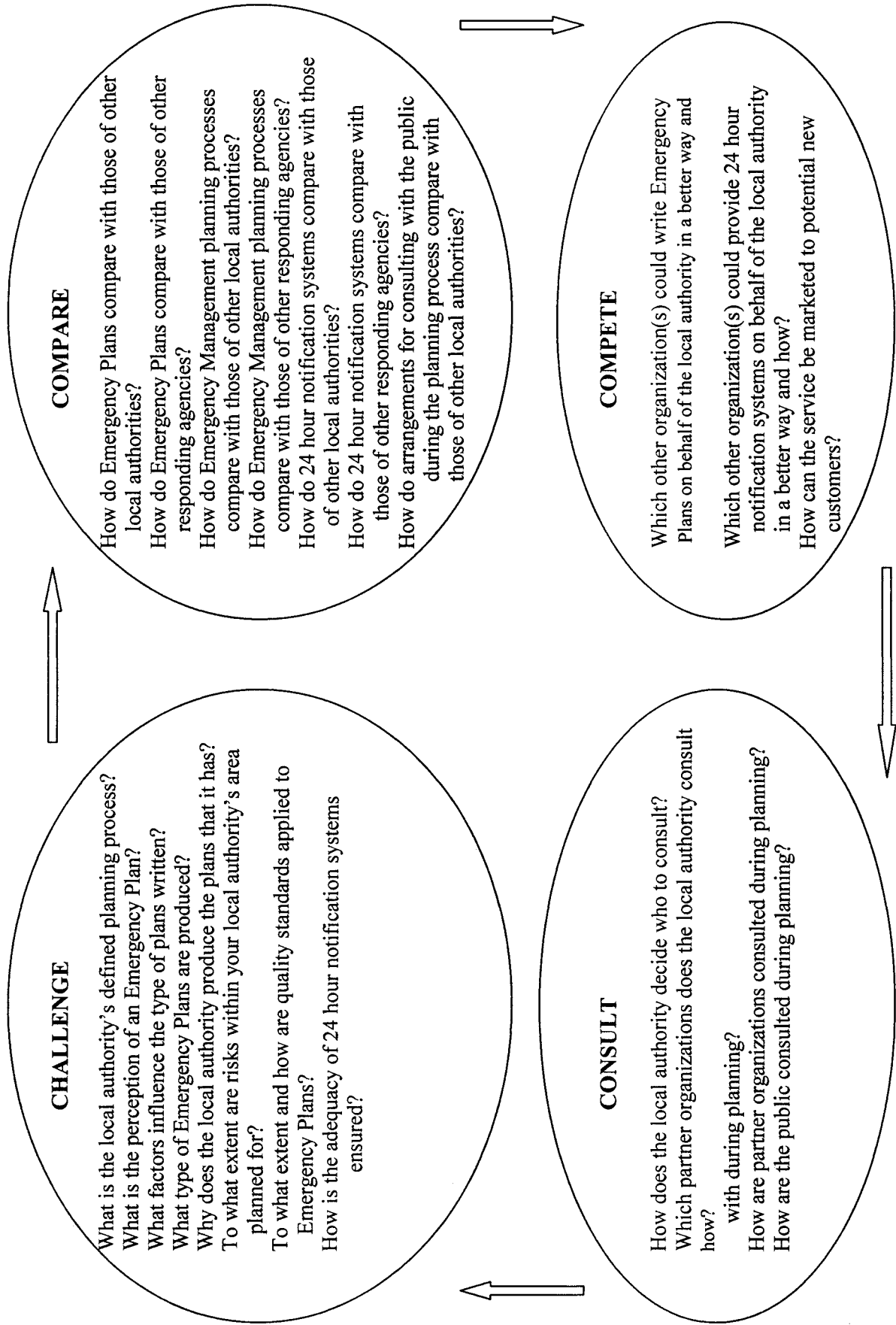


BOTTOM-TIER: APPLYING BEST VALUE TO THE SPECIFIC COMPONENTS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE.

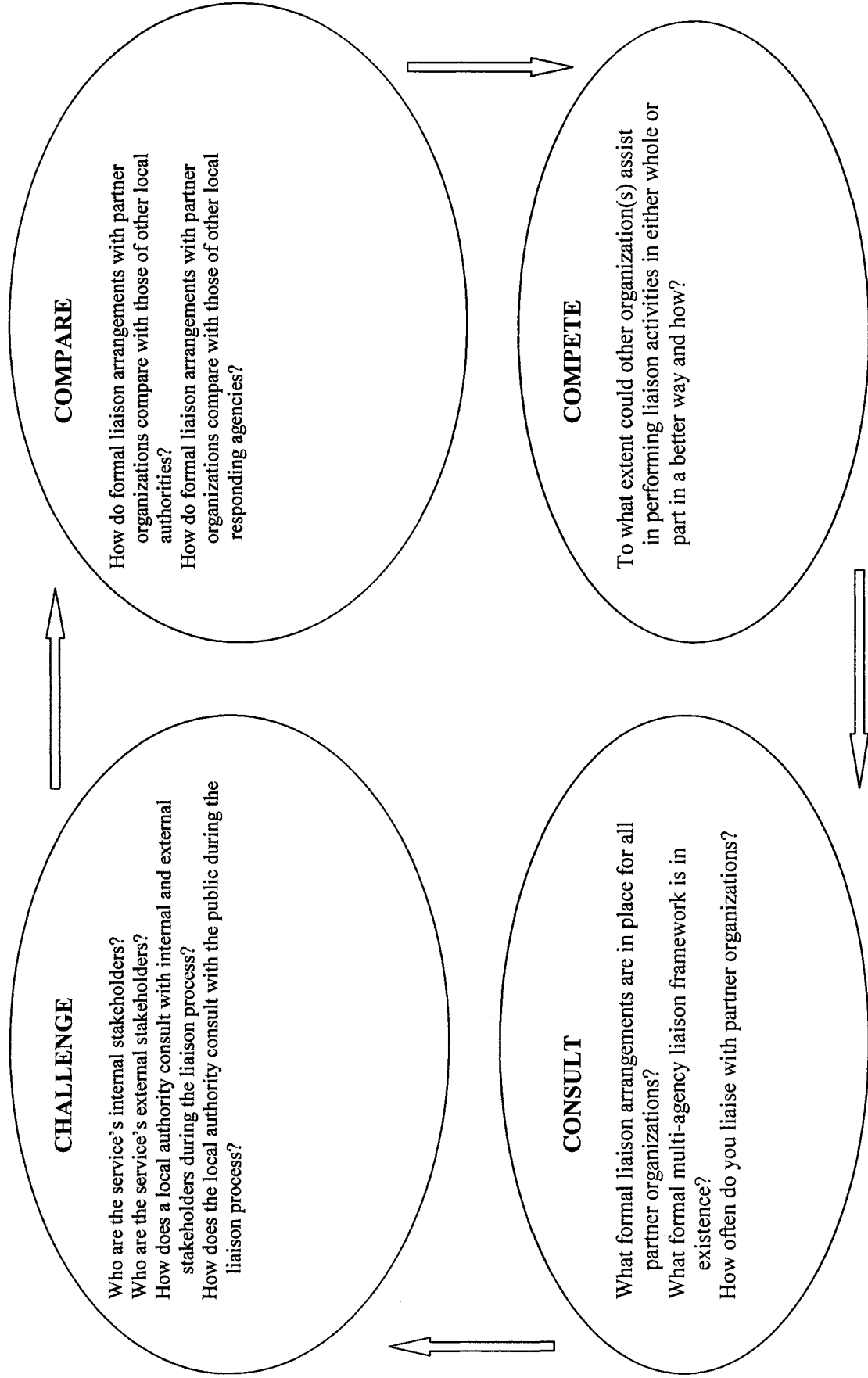
**DIAGRAM 1 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Managerial Process Of Emergency Management**



**DIAGRAM 2 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Planning Process Of Emergency Management**

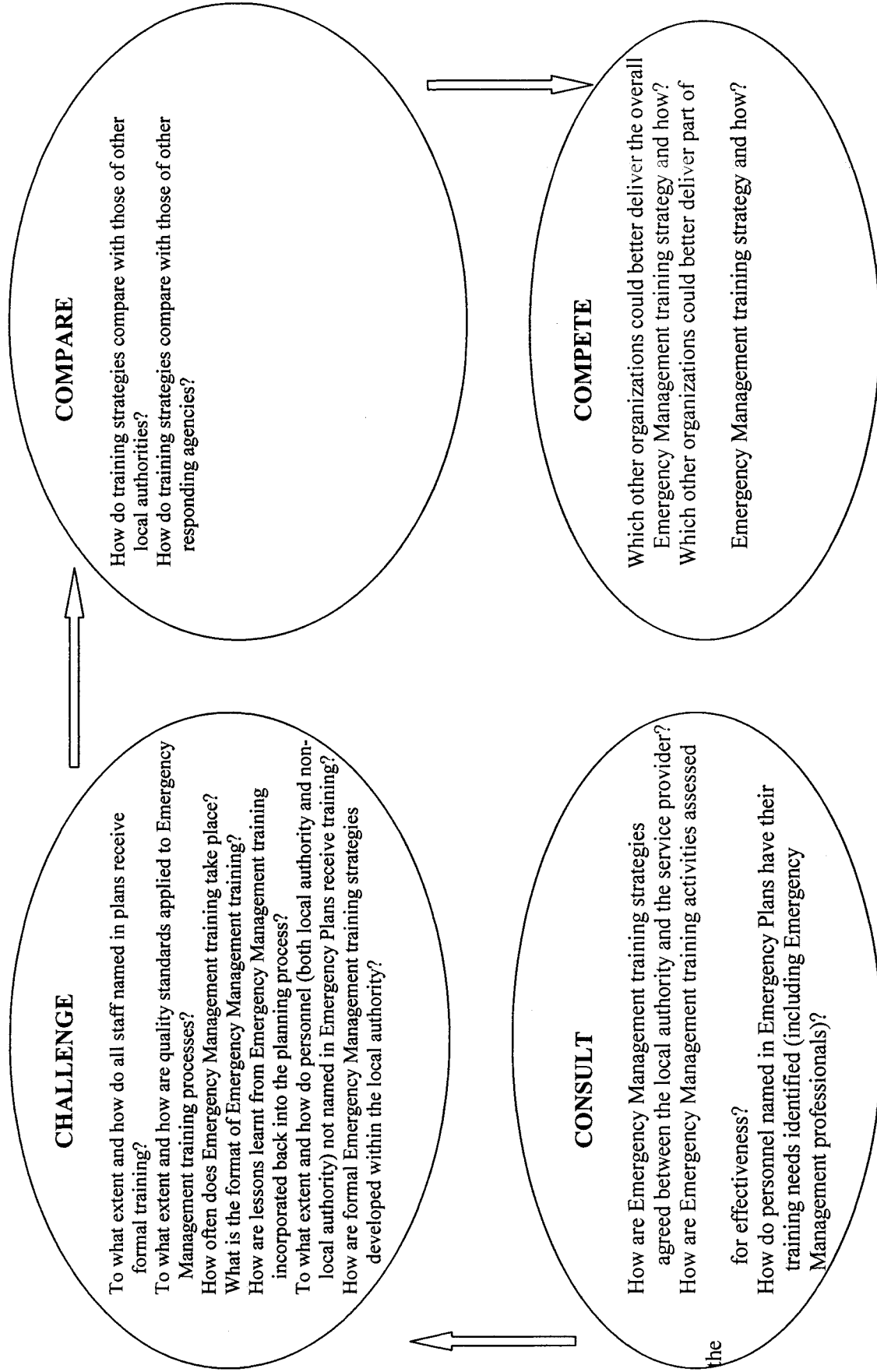


**DIAGRAM 3 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Liaison Process Of Emergency Management**





**DIAGRAM 4 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Training Process Of Emergency Management**



**DIAGRAM 5 - The Best Value Process Applied To The Operational Process Of Emergency Management**

